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CHRIST Our True Principle of Holiness :

O R,

An EXTRACT

Of that Excellent TREATISE

Mr. MARSHALL's

GOSPEL-MYSTERY.

O F

SANCTIFICATION,

Open'd in sundry Practical DIRECTIONS.

Design'd as an INTRODUCTION to a

GOSPEL-LIBRARY:

O R,

A COLLECTION of EXTRACTS from the
most *Evangelical Pieces* that have been pub-
lish'd since the *Reformation* to the *present Time*.

LO N D O N :

Printed for GEORGE KEITH, at the Bible and Crown
in Gracechurch-Street. 1753.



P R E F A C E.

THIS treatise may be justly stiled, one of the most excellent, useful, and judicious performances of human composure, both from the nature of the subject and manner of treating of it. It has had many publick recommendations, in the various editions it has gone through; some of which take extracted as follows.

“ These papers are the profound experiencies of a studious holy soul, learned of the Father, coming from his very heart; and smell of no party or design, but for holiness and happiness. Yet it is to be feared, they will scarcely go down with the heady notionalists of this age, who are of the tribe of Reuben, wavering with every wind of modish doctrine; but in Judah they will be praised. And we hope that many shrubs and cedars may hereby advance in knowledge and comfort. But, not to detain you longer, read over all these directions, that you may fully understand the author, or read none. If you do it with the serious humble spirit in which they were wrote, it may be hoped, (the matter being so weighty, and from so able an hand), through the grace of God, they will sink into thy conscience, and make thee a solid Christian, full of faith, holiness, and consolation. July 1692. N. N.”

“ This excellent treatise of Mr. Marshall’s, gives us a just view of the vast odds there is betwixt Heathenish morality, adorned with the flourishes of human rhetorick, and true gospel holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. And this our testimony we judge to be well supported by the words of that great and evangelick person Mr. Robert Trail, late Minister of the Gospel in the city of London, in his postscript to a pamphlet, intituled A vindication of the Protestant doctrine concerning justification, and of its preachers and professors,

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from the unjust charge of *Antinomianism*. "I
" think, (says he), that Dr. Owen's excellent book
" of justification, and Mr. Marshall's book of the
" mystery of sanctification by faith in Jesus Christ,
" are such vindications and confirmations of the
" Protestant doctrine, against which I fear no ef-
" fectual opposition. — Mr. Marshall was a holy
" and retired person, and is only known to the most
" of us by his book lately published. The book is a
" deep practical, welljointed discourse, and requires
" a more than ordinary attention in reading of it
" with profit. And, if it be singly used, I look
" upon it as one of the most useful books the world
" hath seen for many years. Its excellence is, that
" it leads the serious reader directly to Jesus Christ,
" and cuts the sinews and overturns the foundation
" of the new divinity, by the same argument of
" gospel-holiness by which many attempt to overturn
" the old. And, as it hath already had the seal of
" high approbation by many judicious Ministers and
" Christians that have read it; so I fear not but
" it will stand firm as a rock against all opposi-
" tion, and will prove good seed, and food, and
" light, to many hereafter." This testimony, ab-
stracting from human frailties and escapes, to which
the greatest men are liable while they know but
in part, we hornologate by our subscriptions.

ALEX. HAMILTON } at Sterling.
EBENEZER ERSKINE }

RALPH ERSKINE } at Dunfermline.
JA. WARDLAW }

JO. GIB at Cleish.

JA. OGILVIE at Aberdeen, anno 1733."

" Among the professors of a religious course,
some do still adhere unto a legal scheme of hol-
iness, vainly making it the reason of their peace
and

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and hope, or, at least, of their venturing to found both on Christ; and others are reconciled unto an evangelical scheme of holiness, verily making it the result of their peace and hope, as already founded on Christ, freely offered to them in the gospel.

The correction which one of these sorts, and the instruction in righteousness which both of them need, may be peculiarly gained from this book: and, for these purposes, they are earnestly intreated to peruse it compleatly, and in the same order wherein written: that so the one sort may not, from looking first into the latter part thereof, throw it aside as Antinomian; nor the other sort, from looking only into the former part, throw it aside as legal.

In fine, whereas I have scarcely ever been acquainted with any practical composition, of human product, so evangelical, in a thread more connect, and a method more exact, than this; I equally despair, that any shall reap true benefit, in a partial or confused reading; and hope, that excellent fruit shall, through the divine blessing, redound therefrom, unto such as may read it otherwise.

To proceed thus far, in compliance with the inclination of some gentlemen concerned in this edition, is presumed by, ADAM GIB. Dec. 31, 1744."

Some treatises are excellent upon the person, mediation, and benefits, of our Lord Jesus; upon the necessity of the work of the spirit of God in the application of these benefits, &c. but very deficient in pointing out the peculiar method of divine grace in the application, and also that way of duty, in which we are to seek for the possession and enjoyment. Mr. Marshall has been very particular in these respects, it being the main design of the ensuing directions, in which he has manifested, such a method of sanctification, not as God may peradventure, but will

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will undoubtedly work with, having obligated himself thereunto: so that whoever is gain'd upon by the spirit of God, to fall in with this method, are sure to find success; and may be said to have learn'd the excellent art and mystery of faith and Godliness. Which blessed discovery, when accompanied with a promptitude and disposition unto it, is the most certain characteristic of a true believer.

I would advise the serious reader not hastily to take prejudice against the author for the expressions, persuade yourselves, assure yourselves, &c. which he will sometimes find in this treatise, but let him consider that in the places where they are used, they are scriptural, and let him also consider that the book is not designed so much to be a demonstration of the reality of divine energy in faith or obedience, as it is designed to be a direction to serious souls, to the right method of attaining the desired end, and directions always suppose a willingness to make use of them in order to become effectual; which willingness (without dispute) is allowed and asserted by this author to be created by the spirit of God.

As it is presum'd nothing is left out of this extract that prevents the author from being understood, it is also apprehended to have the full use of an extract; in being less expensive, and so coming into more hands, and of less bulk, and therefore more easily considered.

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Inasmuch as this treatise contains the fundamental reasons of evangelical doctrine, so I apprehend it will not be an improper introduction to the publishing A GOSPEL-LIBRARY, as mentioned in the title page of this book, whereby the reader of this may judge what is understood by evangelical doctrine, the reason and use of such doctrine, and of what nature those things will be which are intended to be extracted.

T H E

T H E
G O S P E L - M Y S T E R Y
O F
S A N C T I F I C A T I O N .

D I R E C T I O N . I.

That we may attain to a true life of holiness, and acceptably perform the duties of holiness and righteousness required in the law, our first work is, to learn the powerful and effectual means whereby we may attain to so great an end.

E X P L I C A T I O N .

THIS direction acquainteth you with the great end for which all those means are designed, that are the principal subject to be here treated of. The scope of all is, to teach you how you may attain to that practice and manner of life, which we call holiness, righteousness, or godliness, obedience, true religion; and which God requireth of us in the law. That you may not miss the mark for want of discerning it, take notice, in few words, that the holiness which I would bring you to, is spiritual, Rom. vii. 34. It consists not only in external works of piety and charity, but in the holy thoughts, imaginations, and affections

fections of the soul, and chiefly in love; from whence all other good works must flow, or else they are not acceptable to God: not only in restraining the execution of sinful lusts, but in longing and delighting to do the will of God, and in a cheerful obedience to God, without repining, fretting, grudging at any duty, as if it were a grievous yoke and burden to you.

The second thing contained in this introductory direction, is the necessity of learning the powerful and effectual means, whereby this great and excellent end may be accomplished, and of making this the *first* work to be done, *before* we can expect success in any attempt for the attainment of it.

This is an advertisement very needful; because many are apt to skip over the lesson concerning the means (that will fill up this whole treatise) as superfluous and useless. When once they know the nature and excellency of the duties of the law, they account nothing wanting but diligent performances; and they rush blindly upon immediate practice, making more haste than good speed. Yea many that are accounted powerful preachers, spend all their zeal in the earnest pressing the immediate practice of the law, without any discovery of the effectual means of performance; as if the works of righteousness were like those servile employments that need no skill and artifice at all, but industry and activity. That you may not stumble at the threshold of a religious life by this common oversight, I shall endeavour to make you sensible, that it is not enough for you to know the *matter* and *reason* of your duty, but that you are also to learn the *powerful* and *effectual means* of performance, before you can successfully apply yourselves to immediate practice. And, for this end, I shall lay before you the considerations following.

1st, We are all, by nature, void of all strength and ability to perform acceptably that holiness and righteousness

ousness which the law requireth, and are *dead in trespasses and sins, and children of wrath*, by the sin of our first father *Adam*, as the scripture witnesseth, *Rom. v. 12. 15. 18. 19. Eph. ii. 1. 2. 3. Rom. viii. 7. 8.* Say to a *strong healthy servant*, Go, and he goeth; Come, and he cometh; Do this, and he doth it: but a *bed-ridden servant* must know first how he may be enabled. Men shew themselves strangely forgetful or hypocritical, in professing original sin in their *prayers, catechisms, and confessions of faith*; and yet urging upon themselves and others, the practice of the law, without the consideration of any strengthening, enlivening means: as if there were *no want of ability, but only of activity*.

2dly, Those that doubt of, or deny the doctrine of *original sin*, may all of them know concerning themselves, (if their consciences be not blind), that the exact justice of God is against them, and they are under the curse of God, and sentence of death for their actual sins, if God should enter into judgment with them, *Rom. i. 32. ii. 2. & iii. 9. Gal. iii. 10.* Is it possible for a man that knoweth this to be his case, and hath not learned any means of getting out of it, to practise the law immediately? *to love God, and every thing in him?*

3dly, Though Heathens might know much of the work of the law by the common light of natural reason and understanding, *Rom. ii. 14.* yet the effectual means of performance cannot be discovered by that light, and therefore are wholly to be learned by the teaching of supernatural revelation. For what is our natural light, but some sparks and glimme-
rings of that which was in *Adam* before the fall? and, even then, in its brightest meridian, it was not sufficient to direct *Adam*, how to recover ability to walk holily, if once he lose it by sin; nor to assure him before-hand, that God would vouchsafe to him any means of recovery.

4thly

4thly, Sanctification, whereby our hearts and lives are conformed to the law, is a grace of God communicated to us by means, as well as justification; and by means of teaching, and learning something that we cannot see without the word, *Act. xxvi. 17. 18.* There are several things pertaining to life and godliness, that are given through knowledge, *2 Pet. i. 2. 3.* There is a form of doctrine made use of by God, to make people free from sin, and servants of righteousness, *Rom. vi. 17. 18.* And there are several pieces of the whole armour of God necessary to be known and put on; that we may stand against sin and Satan in the evil day, *Eph. vi. 13.* Shall we slight and overlook the way of sanctification, when the learning the way of justification hath been accounted worth so many elaborate treatises?

5thly, God hath given, in the holy scriptures, by his inspiration, plentiful instruction in righteousness, *that we may be thoroughly furnished for every good work, 2 Tim. iii. 16. 17.* especially since the day-spring from on high hath visited us, by the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, *to guide our feet in the way of peace, Luke i. 78. 79.* If God condescend to us very low, to teach us this way in the scriptures, and by Christ himself, it must needs be greatly necessary for us, to sit down at his feet, and learn it.

6thly, The way of attaining to godliness is so far from being known without learning out of the holy scripture, that, when it is here plainly revealed, we cannot learn it so easily as the duties of the law; which are known in part by the light of nature, and therefore more easily assented to.

7thly, The certain knowledge of these powerful and effectual means, is of greatest importance and necessity for our establishment in the true faith, and avoiding errors contrary thereunto; for we cannot rationally doubt, that the moral duties of love to God and our neighbour, are absolutely necessary to true

true religion, so that it cannot subsist without them. And, from this principle, we may firmly conclude, that nothing repugnant to the practice of these holy duties, ought to be received as a point of faith delivered to us by the most holy God; and that whatsoever is truly necessary, powerful and effectual to bring us to the practice of them, ought to be believed as proceeding from God, because it hath the image of his holiness and righteousness engraven upon it. This is a sure test and touchstone, which those that are seriously religious will use, to try spirits, and their doctrines, whether they be of God or no: and they cannot rationally approve any doctrine as religious, that is not *according to godliness*, 1 Tim. vi. 3. By this touchstone Christ proveth his doctrine to be of God, because therein he seeketh the glory of God, John vii. 17. 18. And he teacheth us to know false prophets by their fruits, Matth. vii. 15. 16. wherein the fruits which their doctrine tendeth unto, are especially to be considered. Hence it appeareth, that, until we know what are the effectual means of holiness, and what not, we want a necessary touchstone of divine truth, and may be easily deceived by false doctrine, or brought to live in mere suspense concerning the truth of any religion, like the *Seekers*. And, if you mistake, and think those means to be effectual that are not, and those that are effectual to be weak, or of a contrary effect, your error in this will be a false touchstone to try other doctrines, whereby you will ready approve of errors, and refuse the truth; which hath been a *pernicious occasion* of many errors in religion in late days. Get but a true touchstone, by learning this lesson, and you will be able to try the various doctrines of *Protestants*, *Papists*, *Arminians*, *Socinians*, *Antinomians*, *Quakers*; and to discover the truth, and cleave to it, with much satisfaction to your judgment, amongst all the janglings and controversies of these times.

8thly,

8thly, It is also of great importance and necessity for our establishment in holy practice: for we cannot apply ourselves to the practice of holiness with hope of success, except we have some faith concerning the divine assistance; which we have no ground to expect, if we use not such means as God hath appointed to work by. *God meeteth them that remember him in his own ways, If. lxiv. 5. and makes a breach upon them that seek him not after the due order, 1 Chron. xv. 13.* He hath chosen and ordained such means of sanctification and salvation as are for his own glory, and those only he blesseth to us; and he crowneth no man that striveth, except he strive lawfully.

DIRECTION II.

Several endowments and qualifications are necessary to attain a true life of holiness, and enable us for the immediate practice of the law. Particularly, we must have an inclination and propensity of our hearts thereto: and therefore we must be well persuaded of our reconciliation with God, and of our future enjoyment of the everlasting heavenly happiness, and of sufficient strength both to will and perform all duties acceptably, until we come to the enjoyment of that happiness.

EXPLICATION.

IHAVE here shewed FOUR ENDOWMENTS, of which a true ability for the practice of holiness must necessarily be constituted; and by which it must subsist and be maintained; intending to shew afterwards, by what means they are given unto us, and whether the inclination or propensity here mentioned be perfect or imperfect. And they are of such a mysterious nature, that some who own the necessity of endowments to frame them for holiness, are prone to think,

think, that less than these will serve ; and that some of these frame us rather for licentiousness than holiness, as they are here placed before any actual performance of the moral law ; and that some things contrary to them, would put us into a better frame for holiness. Against all such surmises, I shall endeavour such a demonstration of these endowments particularly, as may gain the assent of right reason ; insisting on them in the same order wherein I have placed them in the direction.

In the *FIR*T place, I assert, that an *inclination and propensity of heart to the duties of the law*, is necessary to fraine and enable us for the immediate practice of them. And I mean not such a blind propensity as inanimate creatures and brutes have to their natural operations, but such an one as is meet for intelligent creatures, whereby they are, by the conduct of reason, prone and bent to approve and chuse their duty, and averse to the practice of sin. And therefore I have intimated, that the *three* other endowments mentioned in the direction, are subservant to *this*, as the chief of all ; which are sufficient to make it a rational propensity. This is contrary to those, that, out of zeal for obedience, but not according to knowledge, contend so earnestly for free-will as a necessary and sufficient endowment to enable us to perform our duty, when once we are convinced of it, and of our obligation to it ; and that extol this endowment as the great benefit that universal redemption hath blessed all mankind with : though they consider this free-will without any actual inclination to good ; yea, they cannot but acknowledge, that, in most of mankind that have it, it is incumbered with an actual bent and propensity of the heart altogether to evil. Such a free-will as this is, can never free us from slavery to sin and Satan, and fit us for the practice of the law ; and therefore is not worthy the pains of those that contend so hotly for it. Neither is the will so free as is

is necessary for the practice of holiness, until it be endued with an inclination and propensity thereunto; as may appear by the following arguments.

First, The duties of the law are of such a nature, that they cannot possibly be performed while there is wholly an aversion or mere indifference of the heart to the performance of them, and no good inclination and propensity towards the practice of them; because the chief of all the commandments is, to love the Lord with our whole heart, might, and soul, to love every thing that is in him, to love his will and all his ways, and to like them as good. And all duties must be influenced, in their performance, by this love: we must delight to do the will of God; it must be sweeter to us than the *honey or honey-comb*, *Psal. xl. 8. Job xxiii. 12 Psal. lxiii. 20.* and *xix. 10.* If it were true obedience, (as some would have it) to love our duty only as a market-man loveth foul ways to the market, or as a sick man loveth an unpleasant medicinal potion, or as a captive slave loveth his hard work for fear of a greater evil; then it might be performed with averseness, or want of inclination: but we must love it, as the market-man gain, as the sick man health, as pleasant meat and drink, as the captive liberty. Doubtless there can be no power in the will for this kind of service, without an agreeableness of our inclination to the will of God, a heart according to his own heart. And reason will tell us, that the first motions of lust, which fall not under our choice and deliberation, cannot be avoided without a fixed propensity of the heart to holiness.

Secondly, The image of God (wherein God, according to his infinite wisdom, judged it meet to frame the first *Adam in righteousness, and true holiness, and uprightness*, *Gen. i. 27. Eph. iv. 24. Eccl. vii. 29.*) consisted in an actual bent and propensity of heart to the practice of holiness: not in a mere power of will

to

to chuse good or evil ; for this in itself is neither holy nor unholy, but only a ground-work, on which either the image of God or of Satan may be drawn : nor in an indifference of propensity to the choice of sin or duty ; for this is a wicked disposition in an intelligent creature, that knoweth his duty, and fitteth us only to halt between *God* and *Baal*. The second *Adam* also, the Lord Jesus Christ, was *born an holy thing*, *Luke* i. 35. with an holy disposition of his soul, and propensity to goodness. And can we reasonably hope to arise to the life of holiness, from which the first *Adam* fell, or to be imitators of Christ, since duty is made so difficult by the fall, if we be not renewed in a measure according to the same image of God, and enabled with such a propensity and inclination ?

Thirdly, Original corruption (whereby we are dead to God and godliness from the birth, and made willing slaves to the performance of all actual sins, until the Son of God make us free) consisteth in a propensity and inclination of the heart to sin, and averseness to holiness. Without this propensity to sin, what can that *law of sin in our members be, that warreth against the law of our mind, and leadeth us captive to the service of sin?* *Rom. vii. 23.* How should the *mind of the flesh be continual enmity to the law of God?* *Rom. viii. 7.* I know there is also a blindness of understanding, and other things, belonging to original corruption, which conduce to this evil propensity of the will : but yet this propensity itself is the great evil, the indwelling sin which produceth all actual sins ; and must of necessity be removed or restrained, by restoring that contrary inclination, wherein the image of God consisted ; or else we shall be backward and reprobate to every good work, and whatever freedom the will hath, it shall be employed only in the service of sin.

Fourthly, God restoreth his people to holiness, by giving

giving to them a new heart, and a new spirit, and taking away the heart of stone out of their flesh, and giving them an heart of flesh, Ezek. xxxvi. 26. 27. and he circumciseth their heart to love him with their whole heart and soul. If any one can judge, that this new, clean, circumcised heart, this heart of flesh, this new right spirit, is such an one as hath no actual inclination and propensity to good, but only a power to chuse good or evil, undeservedly called *free-will*, with a present inclination to evil, or an indifference of propensity to both contraries, it will not be worth my labour to convince such a judgment.

The SECOND ENDOWMENT necessary to enable us for the immediate practice of holiness, and concurring with the other two that follow, to work in us a rational propensity to this practice, is, that *we be well persuaded of our reconciliation with God*. And herein I include the great benefit of justification, as the means whereby we are reconciled to God; which is described in scripture, either by forgiving our sins, or by the imputation of righteousness to us, Rom. iv. 5. 6. 7. because both are contained in one and the same justifying act; as one act of illumination comprehends expulsion of darkness, and introduction of light. This is a great mystery, (contrary to the apprehensions, not only of the vulgar, but of some learned divines), that we must be reconciled to God, and justified by the remission of our sins, and imputation of righteousness, before any sincere obedience to the law, that may be enabled for the practice of it. They account, that this doctrine tendeth to the subversion of an holy practice, and is a great pillar of *Antinomianism*; and that the only way to establish sincere obedience, is to make it rather a condition to be performed before our actual justification and reconciliation with God. But the true practice of holiness cannot be secure, except the persuasion of our

our justification, and reconciliation with God, be first obtained without works of the law, that we may be enabled thereby to do them; as I shall now prove by several arguments; intending also to shew, in the following directions, that such a persuasion of the love of God as God giveth to his people, tendeth *only* to holiness, though a mispersuasion of it be in many an occasion of licentiousness.

First, When the first *Adam* was framed for the practice of holiness at his creation, he was highly in the favour of God, and had no sin imputed to him, and was accounted righteous in the sight of God, according to his present state; because he was made upright according to God's image. And there is no reason to doubt, but that these qualifications were his advantage for an holy practice, and the wisdom of God judged them good for that end, and, as soon as he lost them, he became dead in sin. The second *Adam* also in our nature was the beloved of the Father, accounted righteous in the sight of God, without the imputation of any sin to him, except what his office was to bear on the behalf of others. And can we reasonably expect to be imitators of Christ, by performing more difficult obedience than the first *Adam*'s was before the fall, except the like advantages be given to us, by reconciliation, and remission of sins, and imputation of a righteousness given by God to us, when we have none of our own?

Secondly, Those that know their natural deadness under the power of sin and Satan, are fully convinced, that if God leave them to their own hearts, they can do nothing but sin; and that they can do no good work, except it please God, of his great love and mercy, to work it in them, *John* viii. 36. *Phil.* ii. 13. *Rom.* viii. 7, 8.

Yea we know further, (if we know ourselves sufficiently), that our death in sin proceeded from the guilt of the first sin of *Adam*, and the sentence denounced against it, *Gen.* ii. 17. and that it is still maintained

in us by the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law; and that spiritual life will never be given us, to free us from that dominion, except this guilt and curse be removed from us; which is done by actual justification, *Gal. iii. 13. 14. Rom. vi. 14.* And this is sufficient to make us despair of living to God in holiness, while we apprehend ourselves to be under the curse and wrath of God, by reason of our transgressions and sins still lying upon us, *Ezek. xxxiii. 10.*

Thirdly, The nature of the duties of the law is such as requireth an apprehension of our reconciliation with God, and his hearty love and favour towards us for the doing of them. Slavish fear may extort some slavish hypocritical performances from us, such as that of *Pharaoh* in letting the *Israelites* go, sore against his will: but the duty of love cannot be extorted and forced by fear, but it must be won and sweetly allured by an apprehension of God's love and goodness towards us: as that eminent, loving, and beloved disciple testifieth, *1 John iv. 18. 19.* *There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear bath torment: he that feareth, is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us.* Observe here, that we cannot be beforehand with God in loving him, before we apprehend his love to us: And consult your own experience, if you have any true love to God, whether it were not wrought in you by a sense of God's love first towards you. If a man be an enemy to us, we can love him for the sake of our loving reconciled God, because his love will make man's hatred to work for our good; but, if God himself be our enemy, for whose sake can we love him? who is there that can free us from the evil of his enmity, and turn it to our advantage, untill he be pleased to reconcile himself to us?

Fourthly, Our conscience must of necessity be first purged from dead works, that we may serve the living God. And this is done by actual remission of sin, procured by the blood of Christ, and manifested to our conscience; as appeareth by Christ's dying for this end,

Heb.

Heb. ix. 14. 15. and x. 1. 2. 4. 14. 17. 22. That conscience whereby we judge ourselves to be under the guilt of sin and the wrath of god, is accounted an evil conscience in scripture, though it perform its office truly; because it is caused by the evil of sin, and will itself be a cause of our committing more sin, untill it can judge us to be justified from all sin, and received into the favour of God. I have often considered, by what manner of working any sin could effectually destroy the whole image of God in the first *Adam*; and I conclude, it was by working first an evil guilty conscience in him, whereby he judged, that the just God was against him, and cursed him for that one sin. And this was enough to work a shameful nakedness by disorderly lusts, a turning his love wholly from God to the creature, and a desire to be hidden from the presence of God, *Gen.* iii. 8. 10. which was a total destruction of the Image of God's holiness. And we have cause to judge, that from the same cause proceedeth the continual malice, rancour, rage, and blasphemy of the devil, and many notorious wicked men, against God and godliness.

Fifthly, God hath abundantly discovered to us, in his word, that his method, in bringing men from sin to holiness of life, is first to make them know that he loveth them, and that their sins are blotted out. In the time of the *Old Testament*, God appointed divers washings, and the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, to prepare and sanctify them for other parts of his worship in his tabernacle and temple; to figure out his purging their consciences from dead works by the blood of Christ, that they might serve the living God, *Heb.* ix. 9, & seq. Under the *New Testament*, God useth the same method, in loving us first, and washing us from our sins by the blood of Christ, that he may make us priests, to offer the sacrifices of praise and all good works to God, even the Father. He exhorteth us to obey him, because he hath already loved us and our

sins are already pardoned. *Forgive one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children; and walk in love as Christ hath loved us,* Eph. iv. 32. and v. 1. 2. *I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world,* 1 John ii. 12. 15. I might quote abundance of texts of the same nature. We may clearly see by all this, that God hath accounted it a matter of great importance, and hath condescended to take wonderful care in providing plentiful means, both under the *Old* and *New Testament*, that his people might be first cleansed from guilt, and reconciled to himself, to fit them for the acceptable practice of holiness. Away then with all the contrary methods of the new divinity.

The **THIRD ENDOWMENT** necessary to enable us for the practice of holiness, without which a persuasion of our reconciliation with God, would be of little efficacy to work in us a rational propensity to it, is, *that we be persuaded of our future enjoyment of the everlasting heavenly happiness.* This must precede our holy practice, as a cause disposing and alluring us to it. And here observe,

First, That this endowment must be present in us, is sufficiently proved already, by all that I have said concerning the necessity of the persuasion of our firm reconciliation with God by our justification, to prepare us for this practice; because that includeth a persuasion of this future happiness, or else it is of little worth.

Secondly, The sure hope of the glory of heaven, is made use of ordinarily by God, since the fall of *Adam*, as an encouragement to the practice of holiness; as the scripture doth abundantly shew. Christ, the great pattern of holiness, *for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame,* Heb. xii. 2. The Apostles did not faint under affliction, because they knew that it wrought for them *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,* 2 Cor. iv. 16. 17. The believing *Hebrews* took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, *knowing*

knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance, Heb. x. 34. As worldly hope keepeth the world at work in their various employments; so God giveth his people the hope of his glory, to keep them close to his service, Heb. vi. 11. 12. 1 John iii. 3. And it is such a sure hope as shall never make them ashamed, Rom. v. 5. Those that think it below the excellency of their love, to work from a hope of the heavenly reward, do thereby advance their love beyond the love of the Apostles and primitive saints, and even of Christ himself.

Thirdly, This persuasion of our future enjoyment of everlasting happiness, cannot tend to licentiousness, if we understand well, that perfect holiness is a necessary part of that happiness. Neither is it legal or mercenary to be moved by this persuasion, seeing the persuasion itself is not gotten by the works of the law, but by free grace through faith, Gal. v. 5. And, if it be a working from self-love; yet, for certain, it is not that carnal self-love which the scripture condemneth as the mother of sinfulness, 2 Tim. iii. 2. but an holy self-love, inclining us to prefer God above the flesh and the world, such as God directeth us unto, when he exhorteth us to save ourselves, Acts. ii. 40. 1 Tim. iv. 16. And it is so far from being contrary to the pure love of God, that it brings us to love God more purely and intirely. He draweth us to love him by the cords of a man, such cords as the love of men useth to be drawn by, even by his own love to us, in laying his benefits before us, Hos. xi. 4. Therefore the way for us to keep ourselves in the love of God, is to look for his mercy unto eternal life, Jude, ver. 21.

The LAST ENDOWMENT, for the same end as the former, is, that we be well persuaded of sufficient strength both to will and perform our duty acceptably, until we come to the enjoyment of the heavenly happiness. For

First, We are, by nature, dead in trespasses and sins, unable to will or do any thing that is ^{intrinsically} good, notwithstanding the redemption that is by Christ, until

we be actually quickned by Christ, *Eph.* ii. 1. *Rom.* viii, 7, 8, 9. Those that are sufficiently enlightened and humbled, know themselves to be naturally in this case; and that they do not only want executive power to do good, but chiefly an heart to will it, and to be pleased with it; and that, if God work not in them both to will and to do, they shall neither will nor do anything pleasing to him, *Phil.* ii. 13. We may conclude from hence, that whosoever can courageously attempt the practice of the law, without being well persuaded of a sufficient power whereby he may be enabled to be heartily willing, as well as to perform when he is willing; such an one was never yet truly humbled, and brought to know the plague of his own heart; neither doth he truly believe the doctrine of *original sin*, whatever formal profession he makes of it.

Secondly, Those that think sincere conformity to the law in ordinary cases to be so very easy, shew that they neither know it nor themselves. Our work is, not only to alter vicious customs, but to mortify corrupt natural affections which bred those customs; and not only to deny the fulfilling of sinful lusts, but to be full of holy love and desires: yet even the restraining the execution of corrupt lusts, and crossing them by contrary actings, is, in many cases, like *the cutting off a right hand, and plucking out a right eye*, *Mat.* v. 29, 30. I acknowledge, the work of God is easy and pleasant to those whom God rightly furnisheth with endowments for it; but those that assert it to be easy to men in their common condition, shew their imprudence in contradicting the general experience of *Heathens* and *Christians*. Though many duties do not require much labour of body or mind, and might be done with ease if we were willing; yet it is easier to remove a mountain, than to move and incline the heart to will and affect the doing of them. I need not concern myself with those that account that all have sufficient strength for an holy practice, because

because they can do their endeavour, that is, what they can do; for God requireth actual fulfilling of his commands. What, if by our endeavours we can do nothing in any measure according to the rule, shall the law be put off with no performance? and shall such endeavours be accounted sufficient holiness? And what if we cannot so much as endeavour in a right way? If man's ability were the measure of acceptable duty, the commands of the law would signify very little. *

Thirdly, The wisdom of God hath ever furnished people with a good persuasion of a sufficient strength, that they might be enabled both to will and do their duty. The first *Adam* was furnished with such a strength; and we have no cause to think that he was ignorant of it, or that he needed to fear that he should be left to his own corruptions; because he had no corruptions in him, until he had produced them in himself by sinning against strength: and, when he had lost that strength, he could not recover the practice of holiness, until he was acquainted with a better strength, whereby the head of Satan should be bruised, *Gen. iii. 15*. Our Lord Christ, doubtless, knew the infinite power of his Deity to enable him for all that he was to do and suffer in our nature. He knew the Lord God would help him,

* Since God commands nothing in his Law but what he has given Faculties suited unto, nothing but what belongs to the right Use of those Faculties, what necessarily must appear as such in the Minds of all rational Creatures when they consider it, the Corruptions of our Faculties, our native immoral Propensity, our unreasonable Disposition toward what is an Abuse of our Faculties, is our Impotency, and an Impotency of this Kind, the greater it is, renders us not the less, but the more culpable. Thus a Man feels in himself a seeming Contradiction, he can and he cannot, that is, he can do in one Sense, what he cannot do in another. It is hence he condemns himself for doing Ill, being fully persuaded he might have done otherwise, i.e. his Faculties were capable of being employed by him to a more proper Use, but by Reason of his immoral Disposition, he cannot be prevailed on so to answer the right End of his Creation.

therefore he should not be confounded, Isa. 1. 7. The scripture sheweth what plentiful assurance of strength God gave to *Moses, Joshua, Gideon*, when he called them to great employments; and to the *Israelites*, when he called them to subdue the land of *Canaan*. Christ would have the sons of *Zebedee* to consider whether they were able to *drink of his cup*, and to be *baptized with the baptism that he was baptized with*, Mat. xx. 22. *Paul* encourageth believers to the life of holiness, by persuading them, that sin shall not prevail to get the dominion over them, because they *are not under the law, but under grace*, Rom. vi. 13, 14. And he exhorteth them to be *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, that they might be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*, Eph. vi. 10, 11. *John* exhorteth believers *not to love the world, nor the things of the world, because they were strong, and had overcome the wicked one*, 1 John ii. 14, 15. They that were called of God heretofore to work miracles, were first acquainted with the gift of power to work them; and no wise man will attempt to do them without knowledge of the gift: even so, when men that are dead in sin, are called to do the works of a holy life, which are in them great miracles, God maketh a discovery of the gift of power unto them, that he may encourage them in a rational way to such a wonderful enterprize.

DIRECTION III.

The way to get holy endowments and qualifications necessary to frame and enable us for the immediate practice of the law, is, to receive them out of the fulness of Christ, by fellowship with him; and, that we may have this fellowship, we must be in Christ, and have Christ himself in us, by a mystical union with him.

EXPLICATION.

HERE, as much as any where, we have great cause to acknowledge, with the Apostle, that, *without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness*, even

so great that it could not have entered into the heart of man to conceive it, if God had not made it known in the gospel by supernatural revelation. Yea, though it be revealed clearly in the holy scriptures, yet the natural man hath not eyes to see it there, for it is foolishness to him; and, if God express it never so plainly and properly, he will think that God is speaking riddles and parables.

One great mystery is, that the holy frame and disposition whereby our souls are furnished and enabled for immediate practice of the law, *must be obtained by receiving it out of Christ's fulness*, as a thing already prepared and brought to an existence for us in Christ, and treasured up in him. So that we are not at all to work together with Christ, in making or producing that holy frame in us, but only to take it ourselves, and use it in our holy practice, as made ready to our hands. Thus we have fellowship with Christ, in receiving that holy frame of spirit that was originally in him: for fellowship is, when several persons have the same things in common, *1 John i. 1, 2, 3.* This mystery is so great, that, notwithstanding all the light of the gospel, we commonly think that we must get an holy frame by producing it anew in ourselves, and by forming and working it out of our own hearts. Therefore many that are seriously devout, take a great deal of pains to mortify their corrupted nature, and beget an holy frame of heart in themselves, by striving earnestly to master their sinful lusts, and by pressing vehemently upon their hearts many motives to godliness, labouring importunately to squeeze good qualifications out of them, as oil out of a flint. They account, that tho' they be justified by a righteousness wrought out by Christ, yet they must be sanctified by a holiness wrought out by themselves. And tho', out of humility, they are willing to call it infused grace; yet they think they must get the infusion of it by the same manner of working, as if it were wholly acquired by their endeavours. On this account they acknow-

acknowledge the entrance into a godly life to be harsh and unpleasing, because it costs so much struggling with their own hearts and affections to new-frame them. If they knew that this way of entrance is not only harsh and unpleasant, but altogether impossible; and that we do no more to the production of a new nature, than of original sin, tho' we do more to the reception of it: if they knew this, they might save themselves many a bitter agony, and a great deal of mis-spent burdensome labour, and employ their endeavours to enter in at the strait gate, in such a way as would be more pleasant and successful.

Another great mystery in the way of sanctification, is the glorious manner of *our fellowship* with Christ, in receiving an holy frame of heart from him. It is by *our being in Christ*, and having *Christ himself in us*; and that not merely by his universal presence as he is God, but by such a *close union*, as that we are *one spirit and one flesh with him*; which is a privilege peculiar to those that are truly sanctified. I may well call this a *mythical union*, because the Apostle calleth it a *great mystery*, in an epistle full of mysteries, *Eph. v. 22*, intimacing, that it is *eminently great*, above many other mysteries. It is one of the three mystical unions that are the chief mysteries in religion. The other two are, the union of the *Trinity of Persons* in one Godhead, and the union of the divine and human nature in one Person, *Jesus Christ, God and Man*. Though we cannot frame an exact idea of the manner of any of these three unions in our imaginations, because the depth of these mysteries is beyond our comprehension; yet we have cause to believe them all, because they are clearly revealed in scripture, and are a necessary foundation for other points of Christian doctrine. Particularly, this union between Christ and believers, is plain in several places of scripture, affirming that *Christ is, and dwelleth in believers, and they in him*, *John vi. 56. and xiv. 20*; and that they are so joined together as to be-

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come *one spirit*, *1 Cor. vi. 17*; and that believers are members of Christ's body, of his flesh, and of his bones; and they two, Christ and the church, are *one flesh*, *Eph. v. 30, 31*. Furthermore, this union is illustrated in scripture by various resemblances, which would be very much unlike the things which they are made use of to resemble, and would rather seem to beguile us by obscuring the truth, than instruct us by illustrating of it, if there were no true proper union between Christ and believers. It is resembled by the union between God the Father and Christ, *John xiv. 20, and xvii. 22, 23*; between the vine and its branches, *John xv. 4, 5*; between the head and body, *Eph. i. 22, 23*; between bread and the eater, *John vi. 51, 53, 54*. It is not only resembled, but sealed in the Lord's supper.

Several learned men of late acknowledge no other union between Christ and believers, than such as persons or things wholly separated, may have by their *mutual relations* each to other: and accordingly they interpret the places of scripture that speak of this union. When Christ is called the head of the church, they account that a political head or governor is the thing meant. When Christ is said to be in his people, and they in him, they think that the proper meaning is, that Christ's law, doctrine, grace, salvation, or that godliness is in them, and embraced by them: so that Christ here must not be taken for Christ himself, but for some other thing wrought in them by Christ. When Christ and believers are said to be one spirit, and one flesh, they understand it of the agreement of their minds and affections; as if the greatness of the mystery of this union, mentioned *Eph. v. 32*, consisted rather in a harsh trope, or a dark improper expression, than in the depth and abstruseness of the thing itself; and as if Christ and his Apostles had affected obscure intricate expressions, when they speak to the church of things very plain, and easy to be understood. Thus that great mystery,

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the union of believers with Christ himself, which is the glory of the church, and hath been highly owned formerly, both by the ancient fathers, and many eminent Protestant divines, particularly writers concerning the doctrine of the Lord's supper, and by a very general consent of the church in many ages, is now exploded out of the new model of divinity. The reason of exploding it, as I judge in charity, is not, because our late learned refiners of divinity think themselves less able to defend it, than the other two mysterious unions, and to silence the objections of those proud sophisters that will not believe what they cannot comprehend; but rather, because they account it to be one of the fine-wires of *Antinomianism* that lay unobserved in the former usual doctrine; that it tendeth to puff up men with a persuasion that they are justified, and have eternal life in them already, and that they need not depend any longer upon their uncertain performances of the *condition of sincere obedience for salvation*; whereby they account the very foundation of a holy practice to be subverted. But the wisdom of God hath laid another manner of foundation for an holy practice than they imagine, of which *this union (which the builders refuse)* is a principal stone next to the head of the corner. And, in opposition to their corrupt glosses upon the scriptures that prove it, I assert, that *our union with Christ is the cause of our subjection to Christ* as a political head in all things, and of the abiding of his law, doctrine, grace, salvation, and all godliness in us, and of our agreement with him in our minds and affections; and therefore it cannot be altogether the same thing with them. And this assertion is useful for a better understanding of the excellency of this union. It is not a privilege procured by *our sincere obedience and holiness*, as some may imagine, or a reward of *good works* reserved for us in another world; but it is a privilege bestowed upon believers in their very *first entrance into a holy state*, on which all ability to do good works doth depend,

pend, and all sincere obedience to the law doth follow after it, as fruit produced by it.

Having thus far explained the direction, I shall now shew, that though the truth contained in it be above the reach of natural reason, yet it is evidently discovered to those that have their understandings opened, to discern that supernatural revelation of the mysterious way of sanctification which God hath given to us in the holy scriptures.

First, There are several places in scripture that do plainly express it. Some texts shew, that *all things pertaining to our salvation, are treasured up for us in Christ, and comprehended in his fulness*; so that we must have them thence, or not at all, *Col. i. 19. It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.* And, in the same epistle, *Col. ii. 11, 12, 13.* the Apostle sheweth, that the holy nature whereby we live to God, was first produced in us by his death and resurrection: *In whom also ye are circumcised, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh; buried with him; quickened together with him, when you were dead in your sins.* *Eph. i. 3. Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.* An holy frame of spirit, with all its necessary qualifications, must needs be comprehended here in *all spiritual blessings*: and these are given us in *Christ's person.* Another text is *1 Cor. i. 30*, which sheweth, that *Christ is of God made unto us sanctification, by which we are able to walk holily; as well as wisdom, by the knowledge of which we are savingly wise; and righteousness, by the imputation of which we are justified; and redemption, whereby we are redeemed from all misery, to the enjoyment of his glory, as our happiness in the heavenly kingdom.* Other texts of scripture shew plainly that we receive our holiness out of his fulness by fellowship with him, *John i. 16, 17. Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace.* And it is understood of grace answerable to the law given by Moses, which must needs include

include the grace sanctification. There are other texts that reach the proof of the whole direction fully; shewing, not only that our holy endowments are made ready first in Christ for us, and received from Christ; but that we receive them by *union* with Christ. *Col. iii. 10, 11.* *Ye have put on the new man, which is renewed after the image of him that created him; where Christ is all, and in all.* *1 Cor. vi. 17.* *He that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit.* *Gal. ii. 20.* *I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* *1 John v. 11, 12.* *This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath not the Son, hath not life.* Can we desire that God should more clearly teach us, that all the fulness of the new man is in Christ; and all that spiritual nature and life whereby we live to God in holiness; and that they are fixed in him so inseparably, that we cannot have them, except we be joined to him, and have himself abiding in us. Take heed, lest, through prejudice, and hardness of heart, you be guilty of making God a liar, in not believing this eminent record that God hath given to us of his Son.

Secondly, God is pleased to illustrate this mysterious manner of our sanctification by such variety of *similitudes* and *resemblances*, as may put us out of doubt that it is truth, and such a truth as we are highly concerned to know and believe. We receive from Christ a *new holy frame and nature*, whereby we are enabled for an holy practice, by *union* and *fellowship* with him; in like manner, 1. As Christ lived in our nature by the Father, *John vi. 57.* 2. As we receive *original sin and death* propagated to us from the first *Adam*, *Rom. v. 12. 14. 16. 17.* 3. As the natural body receiveth sense, motion, and nourishment, from the head, *Col. ii. 19.* 4. As the branch receiveth its sap, juice, and fructifying virtue, from the vine, *John xv. 4. 5.* 5. As the wife bringeth forth fruit by virtue of her conjugal union with her husband, *Rom. vii. 4.* 6. As *stones become an holy temple by being*

being built upon the foundation, and joined with *the chief corner-stone*, 1 Pet. ii. 4. 5. 6. 7. As we receive the nourishing *virtue* of bread by eating it, and of wine by drinking it, John vi. 51. 55. 57. which last resemblance is used to seal to us our communion with Christ in the Lord's supper. Here are *seven* resemblances instanced, whereof some do illustrate the mystery spoken of more fully than others: all of them do some way intimate, that our new life and holy nature is *first* in Christ, and *then* in us, by a true proper union and fellowship with him. If any should urge, that the similitudes of *Adam* and his seed, and of married couples, do make rather for a relative, than a real union, betwixt Christ and us; let them consider, that all nations are really made of one blood, which was first in *Adam*, Acts xvii. 26; and that the first woman was made out of the body of *Adam*, and was really *bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh*. And by this first married couple the mystical union of Christ and his church is eminently resembled, Gen. ii. 22. 23. 24. with Epb. v. 30. 31. 32. And yet it supposeth both these resemblances in the nearness and fulness of them; because those that are joined to the Lord, are not only one flesh, but one spirit with him.

Thirdly, The end of Christ's *incarnation, death, and resurrection*, was, to prepare and form an holy nature and frame for us in himself, to be communicated to us by union and fellowship with him; and not to enable us to produce in ourselves the first original of such an holy nature by our own endeavours.

1. By his *incarnation*, there was a man created in a new holy frame, after the holiness of the first *Adam's* frame had been marred and abolished by the first transgression: and this new frame was far more excellent than ever the first *Adam's* was; because man was really joined to God by a close inseparable union of the divine and human nature in one person, Christ; so that these natures had communion with each

each other in their actings, and Christ was able to act in his human nature, by power proper to the divine nature, wherein he was one God with the Father. The words that he spake while he was upon earth, he spoke not of himself by any mere human power, but the Father that dwelt in him, he did the works, *John* xiv. 10. Why was it that Christ set up the fallen nature of man in such a wonderful frame of holiness, in bringing it to live and act by communion with God, living and acting in it? One great end was, that he might communicate this excellent frame to his seed, that should be born of him and in him, by his spirit, as the last *Adam*, the quickening spirit; that, *as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so we might also bear the image of the heavenly*, *1 Cor. xv. 45. 49.* in holiness here, and in glory hereafter. Thus he was born, *Emmanuel*, God with us; because the fulness of the Godhead, with all holiness, did first dwell in him bodily, even in his human nature; that we might be filled up with that fulness in him, *Matth. i. 23. Col. ii. 9. 10.* Thus he came down from heaven as living bread, that as he liveth by the Father, so those that eat him may live by him, *John vi. 51. 56.* by the same life of God in them that was first in him.

2. By his *death*, he freed himself from the guilt of our sins imputed to him, and from all that innocent weakness of his human nature, which he had borne for a time for our sakes. And, by freeing himself, he prepared a freedom for us from our whole natural condition; which is both weak as his was, and also polluted with our guilt and sinful corruption. Thus the corrupt natural estate, which is called in scripture the *old man*, was crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed. And it is destroyed in us, not by any wounds that we ourselves can give to it, but by our partaking of that freedom from it, and death unto it, that is already wrought out for us by the death of Christ; as is signified by our

our baptism, wherein we are buried with Christ by the application of his death to us, *Rom. vi. 2. 3. 4. 10. 11.* He died, that he might make, of Jew and Gentile, one new man in himself, *Eph. ii. 15.* and that he might see his seed, *i. e.* such as derive their holy nature from him, *Is. iii. 10.* Let these scriptures be well observed, and they will sufficiently evidence, that Christ died, not that we might be able to form an holy nature in ourselves, but that we might receive one ready prepared and formed in Christ for us, by union and fellowship with him.

Thirdly, By his resurrection he took possession of spiritual life for us, as now fully procured for us, and made to be our right and property by the merit of his death: and therefore we are said to be quickened together with Christ, even when we were dead in sins, and to be raised up together, yea, and to be made to fit together, in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, as our head, while we continue upon earth in our own persons, *Eph. ii. 5. 6.* His resurrection was our resurrection to the life of holiness, as *Adam's* fall was our fall into spiritual death. And we are not ourselves the first makers and formers of our new holy nature, any more than of our original corruption; but both are formed ready for us to partake of them. And, by union with Christ, we partake of that spiritual life that he took possession of for us at his resurrection, and thereby we are enabled to bring forth the fruits of it; as the scripture sheweth by the similitude of a marriage-union, *Rom. vii. 4.* *We are married to him that is raised from the dead, that we might bring forth fruit unto God.* Baptism signifieth the application of Christ's resurrection to us, as well as his death; we are raised up with him, in it, to newness of life, as well as buried with him; and we are taught thereby, that, because *he died unto sin once, and liveth unto God, we should like-wise reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord,* *Rom. vi. 4. 5. 10. 11.*

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Fourthly, Our sanctification is by the Holy Ghost, by whom we live and walk holily, *Rom. xv. 16. Gal. v. 25.* And, when he sanctifieth us, he baptizeth us into Christ, and joineth us to Christ by himself, as the great bond of union, *1 Cor. xii. 13.* So that, according to the scriptural phrase, it is all one, to have Christ himself, and to have the spirit of Christ in us, *Rom. viii. 9. 10.* *He glorifieth Christ; for he receiveth those things that are Christ's, and sheweth them to us, John xvi. 14. 15.* He giveth us an experimental knowledge of those spiritual blessings which he himself prepared for us by the *incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ.*

Fifthly, The effectual causes of those four principal endowments, which, in the foregoing direction, were asserted as necessary to furnish us for the immediate practice of holiness, are comprehended in the fulness of Christ, and treasured up for us in him; and the endowments themselves, together with their causes, are attained richly by union and fellowship with Christ. If we be joined to Christ, our hearts will be no longer left under the power of sinful inclinations, or in a mere indifferency of inclination to good or evil; but they will be powerfully endued with a power, bent, and propensity to the practice of holiness, by the spirit of Christ dwelling in us, and inclining us to mind spiritual things, and to lust against the flesh, *Rom. viii. 1. 4. 5. Gal. v. 17.* And we have in Christ a full reconciliation with God, and an advancement into higher favour with him, than the first *Adam* had in the state of innocence; because of the righteousness that Christ wrought out for us for our justification; which is called the righteousness of God, because it was wrought by one that is God as well as man; and therefore it is of infinite value, to satisfy the justice of God for all our sins, and to procure his pardon and highest favour for us, *2 Cor. v. 19.* And, that we may be persuaded of this reconciliation, we receive the spirit of adoption through Christ,

Christ, whereby we cry, *Abba, Father*, Rom. viii. 15. Hereby also we are persuaded of our future enjoyment of the everlasting happiness, and of sufficient strength both to will and to perform our duty acceptably, until we come to that enjoyment. Furthermore, this comfortable persuasion of our justification and future happiness, and all saving privileges, *cannot tend to licentiousness*, as it is given only in this way of union with Christ, because it is joined inseparably with the gift of *sanctification*, by the spirit of Christ: so that we cannot have justification, or any saving privilege in Christ, except we receive Christ himself, and his holiness, as well as any other benefit; as the scripture testifieth, that *there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit*, Rom. viii. 1.

Sixthly, Whereas it may be doubted, whether the saints that lived before the coming of Christ in the flesh, could possibly be one flesh with him, and receive a new nature by union and fellowship with him, as prepared for them in his fulness; we are to know, that the same Christ that took our flesh, *was before Abraham*, John viii. 58. and he had the same spirit then, which filled his human nature with all its fulness afterwards, and raised it from the dead; and he gave that spirit then to the church, 1 Pet. i. 11. and iii. 18. 19. Now, this spirit was able and effectual to unite those saints to that flesh which Christ was to take to himself in the fulness of time, because he was the same in both, and to give out to them that grace with which Christ would afterwards fill his flesh, for their salvation, as well as ours. Therefore *David* accounted Christ's flesh to be his, and spake of Christ's death and resurrection as his own, beforehand, as fully as any of us can do, since their accomplishment, *Psal. xvi. 9. 10. 11. My flesh also shall rest in hope: for thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy One to see corruption.*

DIRECTION IV.

The means or instruments whereby the spirit of God accomplisheth our union with Christ, and our fellowship with him in all holiness, are, the Gospel, whereby Christ entereth into our hearts to work faith in us; and faith, whereby we actually receive Christ himself, with all his fulness, into our hearts. And this faith is a grace of the spirit, whereby we heartily believe the Gospel, and also believe on Christ, as he is revealed and freely promised to us therein, for all his salvation.

EXPLICATION.

THAT which I asserted, in the foregoing direction, concerning the necessity of our being in Christ, and having Christ in us, by a mystical union, to enable us for an holy practice, might put us to a stand in our endeavours for holiness; because we cannot imagine how we should be able to raise ourselves above our natural sphere, to this glorious union and fellowship, until God be pleased to make known to us, by supernatural revelation, the means whereby his Spirit maketh us partakers of so high a privilege. But God is pleased to help us at a stand to go on forward, by revealing *two means or instruments*, whereby his Spirit accomplisheth the mystical union and fellowship between Christ and us, and whereby rational creatures are capable of attaining thereunto, by his Spirit working in them.

One of these means is the *gospel of the grace of God*, wherein God doth make known to us the *unsearchable riches of Christ, and Christ in us, the hope of glory*, Eph. iii. 8. Col. i. 27. and doth also invite us and command us to believe on Christ for his salvation, and doth encourage us by a free promise of that salvation to *all that believe on him*, Acts xiii. 38. 39. Rom. x.

9. 11. This is God's own instrument of conveyance, wherein he sendeth Christ to us to bless us with his salvation, Acts iii. 26. *It is the ministration of the spirit and of righteousness*, 2 Cor. iii. 6. 8. 9. *Faith cometh by the hearing of it*; and therefore it is a great instrument whereby we are begotten in Christ, and Christ is formed in us, Rom. x. 16. 17. 1 Cor. iv. 15. Gal. iv. 19. There is no need for us to say in our hearts, *Who shall ascend into heaven, to bring Christ down from above?* or, *Who shall descend into the deep, to bring Christ from the dead?* that we may be united, and have fellowship with him in his death and resurrection: *for the word is nigh to us*, the gospel, the word of faith, in which Christ himself graciously condescendeth to be nigh to us; so that we may come at him there, without going any further, if we desire to be joined to him, Rom. x. 6. 7. 8.

The other of these means is *faith*, that is wrought in us by the gospel. This is our *instrument of reception*, whereby the union between Christ and us is accomplished on our part, by our actual receiving Christ himself, with all his fulness, into our hearts; which is the principal subject of the present explanation.

We are to consider, that the design of saving faith is, not only to know the truth of Christ and his salvation, testified and promised in the gospel, *but also to apprehend and receive Christ and his salvation, as given by and with the promise*. Therefore saving faith must necessarily contain two acts, *believing the truth of the gospel*, and *believing on Christ*, as promised freely to us in the gospel for all salvation. By the one, it receiveth *the means* wherein Christ is conveyed to us; by the other, it receiveth *Christ himself* and his salvation in the means: as it is one act, to receive the breast or cup wherein milk or wine are conveyed, and another act, to suck the milk in the breast, and to drink the wine in the cup. And both these acts must be performed heartily, with an unfeigned love to the truth, and a desire of Christ and his salvation above

all things. This is our spiritual appetite, which is necessary for our eating and drinking Christ, the food of life, as a natural appetite is for bodily nourishment. And this love must be to every part of Christ's salvation; to holiness, as well as forgiveness of sins. The former of these acts doth not immediately *unite us* to Christ, because it is terminated only on the *means of conveyance*, the gospel; yet it is a *saving act*, if it be rightly performed, because it inclineth and disposeth the soul to the latter act, whereby Christ himself is immediately received into the heart. He that believeth the gospel with hearty love and liking, as the most excellent truth, will certainly with the like heartiness believe on Christ for his salvation. *They that know the name of the Lord will certainly put their trust in him*, Psal. ix. 10. Therefore, in scripture, saving faith is sometimes described by the former of these acts, as if it were a mere believing the gospel; sometimes by the latter, as a believing on Christ or in Christ. And it is the same thing with trusting on God, or on the Lord, which is so highly commended in the whole scripture, especially in the Old Testament; as may easily appear, by considering, that it hath the same causes, effects, objects, adjuncts, opposites, and all the same circumstances, excepting only that it had a respect to Christ as promised, before his coming, and now it respecteth him as already come in the flesh. *Believing in the Lord, and trusting on his salvation*, are equivalent terms, that explain one another, Psal. lxxvii. 22. I confess, that trusting on things seen or known by the mere light of reason, as on our own wisdom, power, riches, on princes, or any arm of flesh, may not so properly be called believing on them: but trusting on a Saviour, as discovered by a testimony, is properly believing on him. It is also the same thing that is expressed by the terms of *resting, relying, leaning, staying ourselves* on the Lord, called *hoping in the Lord*; because it is the ground of that expectation which is the proper act

act of *hote*, though our believing and trusting be for the present, as well as future benefit of this salvation.

Having thus explained the *nature* of faith, I come now to assert its proper *use* and *office* in our salvation, That it is the *means* and *instrument* whereby we receive Christ, and all his fulness, *actually* in our hearts. This excellent use and office of faith is encountered by a multitude of errors. Men naturally esteem, that it is too small and slight a thing to produce so great effects; as *Naaman* thought washing in *Jordan* too small a matter for the cure of his leprosy. Some will allow, that faith is the *sole condition of our justification*, and the *instrument to receive it*, according to the doctrine maintained formerly by *Protestants* against the *Papists*; but they account, that it is not sufficient or effectual to *sanctification*, but that it rather tendeth to *licentiousness*, if it be not joined with some other means, that may be powerful and effectual to secure an holy practice. They commend this great doctrine of the *Protestants*, as a comfortable cordial for persons upon their death-beds, or in agonies under terrors of conscience; but they account, that it is not good for ordinary food, and that it is wisdom in ministers to preach it seldom and sparingly, and not without some antidote or corrective, to prevent the *licentiousness* to which it tendeth. Some late refiners of the *Protestant* religion have thought fit to new-model this doctrine, and to make saving faith to be only a *condition to procure a right and title to our justification by the righteousness of Christ*, which must be performed before we can lay any good claim to the enjoyment of it, and before we have any right to use any instrument for the actual receiving of it; and this they call an accepting of, or receiving Christ. And, that they may the better secure the practice of holiness by their conditional faith, they will not have *trusting on God or Christ for salvation*, to be accounted the principal saving act of it; because, as it seemeth to them, many loose wicked people trust on God and Christ for their

salvation, as much as others, and are, by their confidence, hardened the more in their wickedness: but they had rather it should be *obedience to all Christ's laws*, at least in *resolution*; or a *consent that Christ should be their Lord, accepting of his terms of salvation, and a resignation of themselves to his government in all things*. It is a sign that the scripture-form of teaching is grown into *diseesteem* with our great masters of reason, when *trusting in the Lord*, so much commended in scripture, is accounted a mean and ordinary thing. They endeavour to affright us from owning faith to be an instrument of *justification*, by telling us, that thereby we that use the instrument, are made our own *principal Justifiers*, to the dishonour of God; though it might be easily answered, that we are made thereby only the *principal receivers of our own justification from God, the giver of it, to whom all the glory doth belong*.

All these errors will fall, if it can be proved, that such a faith as I have described, is an instrument whereby we actually receive Christ himself into our hearts, and holiness of heart and life, as well as *justification*, by union and fellowship with him. For the proof of it, I shall offer the following arguments.

First, By faith we have the actual enjoyment and possession of Christ himself, and not only of remission of sins, but of life, and so of holiness. *Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith*, Eph. iii. 17. We live to God; and yet not we, but *Christ liveth in us by the faith of the Son of God*, Gal. ii. 19. 20. *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the Son, and everlasting life that is in him*, 1 John v. 12. 13. John iii. 36. *He that beareth Christ's word, and believeth on him that sent Christ, hath everlasting life, and is passed from death unto life*, John v. 24. These texts express clearly such a faith as I have described. Therefore the efficiency or operation of faith, in order to the enjoyment of Christ and his fulness, cannot be a procurement of a bare right or title to this enjoyment; but rather it must be an entrance into it, and taking possession of it. *We have our access and*

and entrance by faith into that grace of Christ wherein we stand, Rom. v. 2.

Secondly, The scripture plainly ascribeth this effect to faith, that by it we receive Christ, put him on, are rooted and grounded in him; and also that we receive the Spirit, remission of sins, and an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, John i. 12. Gal. iii. 26. 27. Col. ii. 6. 7. Gal. iii. 14. Acts xxvi. 18. And the scripture illustrateth this receiving by the similitude of eating and drinking: *He that believeth on Christ, drinketh the living water of his Spirit*, John vii. 38. 39. *Christ is the bread of life; his flesh is meat indeed, and his blood is drink indeed*. And the way to eat and drink it, is, to believe in Christ; and, by so doing, we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us, and have everlasting life, John vi. 35. 47. 48. 54. 55. 56. How can it be taught more clearly, that we receive Christ himself properly into our souls by faith, as we do receive food into our bodies by eating and drinking, and that Christ is as truly united to us thereby as our food when we eat or drink it?

Thirdly, Christ, with all his salvation, is freely given by the grace of God to all that believe on him; for *we are saved by grace thro' faith; and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. 9. *We are justified freely by his grace, through faith in his blood*, Rom. iii. 24. 25. The condition of a free gift is only, *Take and have*. And in this sense we will readily acknowledge faith to be a condition, allowing a liberty in terms where we agree in the thing: but, if you give a pepper-corn to purchase a title to it, then you spoil the freeness of the gift. The *free offer* of Christ to you, is sufficient to confer upon you a right, yea to make it your duty, to receive Christ and his salvation as yours*. And, because we receive Christ by faith as a free

* *The free offer does not suppose a natural willingness, or what is called free will, but is designed to confer*

a free gift, therefore we may account faith to be the instrument, and, as it were, the hand whereby we receive him.

Fourthly, It has been already proved, that all spiritual life and holiness is treasured up in the fulness of Christ, and communicated to us by union with him. And faith itself is given to us, and wrought in the very working of the union, being an instrument, whereby we may actively receive and embrace Christ, who is already come into the soul, to take possession of it as his own habitation.

Fifthly, True saving faith, such as I have described, hath, in its nature, and manner of operation, a peculiar aptitude and fitness to receive Christ and his salvation, and to unite our souls unto him ; and to furnish the soul with a new holy nature, and bring forth an holy practice by union and fellowship with him. God hath fitted natural instruments for their office, as hands, feet, &c. so that we may know, by their nature and natural manner of operation, for what use they are designed. In like manner we may know that faith is an instrument formed on purpose for our union with Christ, and sanctification, if we consider what a peculiar fitness it hath for the work.

Sixthly, The grace of faith is well fitted for the soul's receiving Christ, and union with him, as any instrument of the body is for receiving and closing with things needful for it. By the very act of hearty trusting or believing on Christ for all salvation and happiness, the soul casteth and putteth away from itself every thing that keepeth it at a distance from Christ ; as all confidence in our strength, endeavours, works, privileges ; or in any worldly pleasures, profits, honours ; or in any human helps and succours, for our happiness and salvation : because such confidences are inconsistent with our confidence in Christ for all salvation.

*confer a right to appropriate, and is readily embraced by
she whom God makes willing.*

vation. Let us consider, that Christ and his salvation cannot be seen, or handled, or attained to, by any bodily motion; but are revealed and promised to us in the word. Now, let any invent, if they can, any way for the soul to exercise any motion or activeness in receiving of this unseen promised salvation, besides believing the word, and trusting on Christ for the benefit promised. If Christ were to be earned by works, or any other kind of conditional faith; yet a faith must be instrumental to receive him. Some think love as fit to be the uniting grace; but I have shewed that love to Christ's salvation is an ingredient in faith. And though love be an appetite unto union, yet we have no other likely way to fill this appetite, while we are in this world, besides *trust* on Christ for all his benefits, as he is promised in the gospel.

2dly, There is in this saving faith a direct tendency to furnish the soul with an holy frame and nature, and all endowments necessary thereunto, out of the fulness of Christ. An hearty affectionate *trusting* on Christ for all his salvation, as freely promised to us, hath naturally enough in it to work in our souls a rational bent and inclination to, and ability for the practice of all holiness; because it comprehendeth in it a *trusting*, that, through Christ, we are dead to sin, and alive to God, and that our old man is crucified, Rom vi. 2. 6. 4. and that we live by the Spirit, Gal. v. 25; and that we have forgiveness of sin; and that God is our God, Psal. xxxi. 14; and that we have in the Lord righteousness and strength, whereby we are able to do all things, Is. xlv. 24. Phil. iv. 13; and that we shall be gloriously happy in the enjoyment of Christ to all eternity, Phil. iii. 20. 21. And how can we otherwise judge, but that those that have an hearty love to Christ, and can, upon a good ground, think and speak such things concerning themselves, must needs be heartily disposed and mightily strengthened for the practice of holiness?

3dly,

3dly, Because faith hath such a natural tendency to dispose and strengthen the soul for the practice of holiness, we have cause to judge it a meet instrument to accomplish every part of that practice in an acceptable manner. Those that with a due affection believe steadfastly on Christ for the free gift of all his salvation, may find, by experience, that they are carried forth by that faith, according to the measure of its strength or weakness, to love God heartily, because God hath *loved them first*, 1 John iv. 19; to praise him, to pray to him in the name of Christ, Eph. v. 20. John xvi. 26. 27; to be patient with cheerfulness under all afflictions, giving thanks to the Father, that hath called them to this heavenly inheritance, Col. i. 11. 12; to love all the children of God, out of love to their heavenly Father, 1 John v. 1; to walk as Christ walked, 6 John ii. 6; and to give themselves up to live to Christ in all things, as constrained by his love in dying for them, 2 Cor. v. 14. We have a cloud of witnesses concerning the excellent works that were produced by faith, Heb. xi. And though trusting on Christ be accounted such a slight and contemptible thing, yet I know no work of obedience which it is not able to produce. And note the excellent manner of working by faith. By it we live and act in all good works, as people in Christ, as raised above ourselves and our natural state, by partaking of him and his salvation; and we do all in his name, and on his account. This is the practice of that mysterious manner of living to God in holiness, which is peculiar to the Christian religion, wherein we live; *and yet not we, but Christ liveth in us*, Gal. ii. 20. And who can imagine any other way but this for such a practice, while Christ and his salvation is known to us only by the gospel?

This explanation that I have made of the nature and office of true faith; and of its aptitude for its office, is sufficient to evidence, that it is *a most holy faith*, as it is called, Jude, vers. 20; and that such a trusting

trusting on Christ as I have described, in its own nature, cannot have any tendency to licentiousness, but only to holiness; and that it rooteth and groundeth us in holiness, more than the mere accepting of any terms of salvation, and consenting to have Christ for our Lord, can do; and is more powerful to secure an holy practice, than any of those resolutions of obedience, or resignating acts, that some would have to be the great conditions of our salvation; which are indeed no better than hypocritical acts, if they be not produced by this faith. There is indeed a counterfeit dead faith, such as wicked men may have: and, if that tend to licentiousness, let not true faith be blamed; but rather mark the description of it which I have given, that you may not be deceived with a counterfeit faith instead of it.

D I R E C T I O N . V.

We cannot attain to the practice of true holiness by any of our endeavours, while we continue in our natural state, and are not partakers of a new state by union and fellowship with Christ through faith.

E X P L I C A T I O N .

IT is evident, all have not that precious faith whereby Christ dwelleth in our hearts; yea, the number of those that have it is small, comparatively to the whole world that lieth in wickedness, *1 John v. 19. 20*; and many of those that at length attain unto it, do continue without it for some considerable time, *Eph. ii. 12*. And though some may have the same spirit of faith given to them from their mother's womb, (as *John the Baptist, Luke i. 15. 44*), yet even in them there is a *natural* being by generation, before there can be a *spiritual* being by regeneration, *1 Cor. xv. 46*. Hence ariseth the consideration of two states or conditions of the children of men, in matters that appertain to God and godliness; the one of which is vastly different from the other. Those that have the happiness of a new birth and creation

creation in Christ by faith, are thereby placed in a very excellent state, consisting in the enjoyment of the righteousness of Christ, for their justification ; and of the spirit of Christ, to live by, in holiness here, and glory for ever ; as hath already appeared. Those that are not in Christ by faith, cannot be in a better state than that which they received with their nature from the first *Adam*, by being once born and created in him, or than they can attain to by the power of that nature, with any such help as God is pleased to afford it. This latter I call a *natural* state ; because it consisteth in such things as we have either received by natural generation, or can attain to by natural power through divine assistance ; as the scripture calls man in this state the *natural man*, *1 Cor. ii. 14.* the former I call a *new* state, because we enter into it by a new birth in Christ : and I may call it a *spiritual* state, according to the scripture ; because it is received from Christ the quickning spirit ; and the *natural* and *spiritual* man are opposed, *1 Cor. ii. 14. 15.*

It is a common error of those that are in a corrupt natural state, that they seek to reform their lives according to the law, without any thoughts that their state must be changed, before their lives can be changed from sin to righteousness. The Heathens, that knew nothing of a new state in Christ, were urged, by their own consciences, to practise several duties of the law, according to the knowledge they had by the light of nature, *Rom. ii. 14. 15.* *Israel*, according to the flesh, had a zeal of God and godliness, and endeavoured to practise the written law, at least in external performances, while *Paul* attained so far, that he was blameless in these external performances of the righteousness of the law, while he persecuted the church of Christ, *Phil. iii. 6.* Some are so near the kingdom of God, while they continue in a natural state, that they are convinced of the spirituality of the law, that it bindeth us principally to love God

God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love our neighbour as ourselves, and to perform universal obedience to God, in all our inward thoughts and affections, as well as in all our outward actions, and to do all the duties that we owe to our neighbour, out of this hearty love. *Mark xii. 33. 34.* And they struggle and labour with great earnestness to subdue their inward thoughts and affections to the law of God, and to abstain not only from some sins, but from all known sins, and to perform every known duty of the law with their whole heart and soul, as they think; and are so active and intent in their devout practice, that they over-work their natural strength; and so fervent in their zeal, that they are ready even to kill their bodies with fastings and other macerations, that they may kill their sinful lusts. They are strongly convinced, that holiness is absolutely necessary to salvation, and deeply affected with the terrors of damnation: and yet they were never so much enlightened in the mystery of the gospel, as to know that a new state in Christ is necessary to a new life; therefore they labour in vain to reform their natural state, instead of getting above it in Christ. And some of these, when they have mis-spent many years in striving against the stream of their lusts without any success, do at last fall miserably into despair of ever attaining to holiness, and turn to wallowing in the mire of their lusts, or are fearfully swallowed up with horror of conscience. There are several false opinions whereby such ignorant zealots encourage themselves in their fruitless endeavours. Some of them judge, that they are able to practise holiness, because they are not compelled to sin, and may abstain from it, if they will. To this they add, that Christ, by the merit of his death, hath restored that freedom of will to good, which was lost by the fall, and hath set nature upon its legs again; and that, if they endeavour to do what lieth in them, Christ will do the rest, by assisting them with the supplies of his saving grace,

so they trust upon the grace of Christ to help them in their endeavours. They plead further, that it would not consist with the justice of God to punish them for sin, if they could not avoid it; and that it would be in vain for the ministers of the gospel to preach to them, and exhort them to any saving duty, if they cannot perform it. They produce examples of Heathens, and of such as had the name of Christians without any acquaintance with the faith that I have described, who have attained to a great excellency in religious words and works.

My work at present is, to deliver those ignorant zealots from their fruitless tormenting labours, by bringing them to despair of the attainment of holiness in a natural state, that they may seek it only in a new state by faith in Christ, where they may certainly find it without such tormenting labour and anxiety of spirit. For this end, I shall confirm the truth asserted in the direction, and fortify it against the forementioned false opinions, by the ensuing considerations.

First, The foundation of this assertion is firmly laid in the directions already explained, and confirmed by many places of scripture. For, if all endowments, necessary to enable us for an holy practice, be to be had only in a state of union and fellowship with Christ by faith, and faith itself not by the natural power of free-will, but by the power of Christ, coming into the soul by his spirit, to unite us with himself; who feeth not, that the attainment of true holiness by any of our most vigorous endeavours, while we continue in our natural condition, is altogether hopeless?

Secondly, It is evident, that we cannot practise true holiness, while we continue in a natural state; because we must be *born again of water and of the Spirit*, or else *we cannot enter into the kingdom of God*, John iii. 3. 5. and *we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them*, Eph. ii. 10. Now, a *new birth and creation* is more than a mere reforming and repairing our

our natural state. If we were put into a certain state and condition by the first birth and creation, much more by the second. For the first produceth the substance of a man as well as a state; the second hath nothing to produce, but a new state of the same person.

Thirdly, It is positively asserted by the Apostle *Paul*, that *those that are in the flesh, cannot please God*, Rom. viii. 8. Many are too overly and negligent in considering the sense of this gospel-phrase, what it is to be *in the flesh*. They understand no more by it than to be sinful, or to be addicted inordinately to please the sensitive appetite. They should consider, that the Apostle speaketh here of *being in the flesh*, as the cause of sinfulness; as, in the next verse, he speaketh of *being in the Spirit*, as the cause of holiness: and, whatever cause it be, it must needs be distinct from its effect. *Sin* is a property of the *flesh*, or something that dwelleth in the *flesh*, Rom. vii. 18. and therefore it is not the flesh itself. The *flesh* is that which *lusteth against the Spirit*, Gal. v. 17. and therefore it is not merely sinful lusting. The true interpretation is, that by *flesh* is meant the nature of man, as it is corrupted by the fall of *Adam*, and propagated from him to us, in that corrupt state, by natural generation; and to *be in the flesh*, is to be in a *natural state*; as to *be in the Spirit*, is to be in a *new state*, by the *Spirit of Christ* dwelling in us, Rom. viii. 9. So the Apostle, if he be rightly understood, hath said enough to make us despair utterly of attaining to true holiness, while we continue in a natural state.

Fourthly, The Apostle testifieth, that *those that have been taught as the truth is in Jesus, have learned to avoid the former sinful conversation, by putting off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and by putting on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness*, Eph. iv. 21. 22. 24. Let them learn here, that the *old* and *new* man are two contrary states, containing in them, not only sin and holiness, but all other things that dispose and incline us to the practice of them; and that the *old*

man must be put off, as crucified with Christ, before we can be freed from the practice of sin, Rom. vi. 6. 7. And therefore we cannot lead a new life, until we have first gotten a new state by faith in Christ. Let me add here, that the meaning of the Apostle is the same, Rom. xiii. 12. 13. 14. where he directeth us to *put on the Lord Jesus Christ*, as the means whereby we may *cast off the deeds of darkness, and walk holily, as in the day-time, not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh.*

Fifthly, Our natural state hath several properties that wholly disable us for the practice of holiness, and enslave us to the practice of sin, while we continue in it. One thing belonging to our natural state, is the *guilt of sin*, even of Adam's first sin, and of the sinful depravation of our nature, and of all our own actual transgressions; and therefore we are by nature *the children of wrath*, Eph. ii. 3. and under the curse of God. The benefit of remission of our sins, and freedom from condemnation, is not given to us in the flesh, or in a natural state, but only in Christ, Rom. viii. 1. Eph. i. 7. And can we imagine, that a man should be able to prevail against sin, while God is against him, and curseth him? Another property, inseparable from the former, is *an evil conscience*, which denounceth the wrath of God against us for sin, and inclineth us to abhor him as our enemy, rather than to love him, as hath been shewed; or, if it be a *blind conscience*, it hardeneth us the more in our sins. A *third property*, is *an evil inclination*, tending only to sin; which therefore is called *sin that dwelleth in us*, and *the law of sin in our members*, that powerfully subdueth and *captivateth to the service of sin*, Rom. vii. 20. 23. It is a fixed propensity to lust against the law without any deliberation; and therefore its lustings are not to be prevented by any diligence or watchfulnes. *The mind of the flesh is enmity against God*; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, Rom. viii. 7. How vain then is it to plead, that they can do good if they will, when their minds and will itself is enslaved to sin? A *fourth property*, is *subjection to the power of*

the devil, who is the god of this world, that bath blinded the minds of all that believe not, 2 Cor. iv. 4. and will certainly conquer all whom he fighteth with upon his own dunghill; that is, *in a natural state*. And, from all these properties, we may well conclude, that our natural state hath the property, never to be good, to be stark dead in sin, Eph. ii. 1. according to the sentence denounced against the first sin of mankind in Adam, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*, Gen. ii. 17. For you can no more bring it to holiness, by any the most vehement motives and endeavours; than you can bring a dead carcase to life, by chaffing and rubbing it. You can stir up no strength or fortifying grace in the natural man by such motives and endeavours; because there is no strength in him to be stirred up, Rom. v. 6. Though you do all that lieth in you to the utmost, while you are in this flesh you can do nothing but sin; for there is no good thing in you: as the Apostle Paul sheweth by his own experience: *I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. vii. 18.

Sixthly, We have no good ground to trust on Christ, *to help us to will or to do that* which is acceptable to him, while we continue in our natural state; or to imagine, that freedom of will to holiness is restored to us by the merit of his death. For, as it hath been already shewed, Christ aimed at an higher end, in his incarnation, death and resurrection, than the restoring the decay and ruins of our natural state. He aimed to advance us to a new state, more excellent than the state of nature ever was, by union and fellowship with himself; that we might live to God, not by the power of a natural free-will, but by the power of his Spirit living and acting in us. So we may conclude, that our natural state is irrecoverable and desperate, because Christ, the only Saviour, did not aim at the recovery of it. *If Christ be not in us, we are reprobates*, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. i. e. we are in a state which God hath rejected from partaking of his salvation; so that we are not to expect any assistance

from God to make us holy in it, but rather to deliver us from it.

Seventhly, This doth not at all discharge those that are in a natural state from obligation to holiness of life, nor render them excusable for their sins at the tribunal of God's justice. Inability to pay debts excuseth not a debtor that hath lavished away his estate; neither doth drunkenness excuse the mad actings of a drunkard, but rather aggravates his sin. And our impotency consisteth not in a mere want of an *executive power*, but in the want of a *willing mind*, to practise true holiness and righteousness. Naturally we love it not, we like it not, but lust against it, *Gal. v. 17.* and *hate the light*, *John iii. 20.* If men in a natural state had a hearty love and liking to true holiness, and a desire and serious endeavour to practise it out of hearty love, and yet failed in the event, then they might under some pretence plead for their excuse (as some do for them) that they were compelled to sin by an inevitable fate. *How abominable then and filthy is man, that drinketh iniquity as water?* *Job xv. 16.* that cannot practise holiness, because he will not? This is their just *condemnation*, that they *love darkness rather than light*. They deserve to be partakers with the devils in torments, as they partake with them in evil lusts; and their inability to do good, will no more excuse them, than it excuseth the devils.

Eighthly, Neither will this assertion make it a vain thing to preach the gospel to natural people, and to exhort them to true repentance, and faith in Christ, for their conversion and salvation. For the design of our preaching is not to bring them to holiness in their natural state, but to raise them above it, and to present them *perfect in Christ*, in the performance of those duties, *Col. i. 28.* And though they cannot perform those duties by their natural strength; yet the gospel is made effectual for their conversion and salvation, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which accompanieth the preaching of it, to quicken those that are dead in sin, and to create them anew in Christ, by giving to them

them repentance unto life, and a lively faith in Christ. It dependeth not at all upon the power of our free-will, to make it successful for our conversion ; but it conveyeth into the soul that life and power whereby we receive and obey it. Christ can make those that are dead in sin *to hear his voice, and live*, John v. 25. Therefore he can speak to them by his gospel, and command them to repent and believe with good success, as well as he could say to dead carcases, *Talitha cumi*, Mark v. 41 ; *Lazarus, come forth*, John xi. 43. 44 ; and to the sick of the palsy, *Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house*, Matt. ix. 6.

Ninthly, There is no reason that the examples of Heathen philosophers, or any Jews or Christians by outward profession, that have lived without the saving knowledge of God in Christ, should move us, by their wise sayings and renowned attainments, in the practice of devotion and morality, to recede from this truth, that hath been so fully confirmed out of the holy scriptures. Men in a natural state may have strong conviction of the infinite power, wisdom, justice, and goodness of God, and of the judgment to come, and the everlasting happiness of the godly, and the torments of the wicked ; and these convictions may stir them up, not only to make an high profession, and to utter rare sayings concerning God and godliness ; but also to labour with great earnestness to avoid all known sin, to subdue their lusts, to perform universal obedience to God in all known duties, and to serve him with their lives and estates to the utmost, and to extort out of their hearts some kind of love to God and godliness, that, if possible, they may escape the terrible torments of hell, and procure everlasting happiness by their endeavours * : yet all their love to God is but forced and feigned ; they have no hearty liking to God or his service ; they account him an hard master, and his commandments

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grievous,

* See *Phil.* iii. 6. 7. 8 *Rom.* ix. 31. 32.

grievous, and they repine and fret inwardly at the burden of them ; and, were it not for fear of everlasting fire, they would little regard the enjoyment of God in heaven ; and they would be glad if they might have the liberty to enjoy their lusts without danger of damnation. *He maketh his enemies to yield feigned obedience to him, Psal. lxvi. 3 ;* and to do many things good for the matter of them, though they can do nothing in a right holy manner. He hath appointed several means to restrain our corruptions ; as the law, terrors of conscience, terrible judgments, and rewards in this life, magistrates, human laws, labour for necessaries, as food and raiment. And those gospel means that are effectual for sanctification, serve also for restraint of sin. God hath gracious ends in this restraint of sin, that his church may be preserved, and his gospel preached in the world ; and that these natural men may be in a better capacity to receive the instructions of the gospel.

DIRECTION VI.

Those that endeavour to perform sincere obedience to all the commands of Christ, as the condition whereby they are to procure for themselves a right and title to salvation, and a good ground to trust on him for the same, do seek their salvation by the works of the law, and not by the faith of Christ, as he is revealed in the gospel : and they shall never be able to perform sincerely any true holy obedience by all such endeavours.

EXPLICATION.

FOR the understanding the terms of this direction, note here, that I take salvation as comprehending justification, as well as other saving benefits ; and sincere obedience as comprehending holy resolutions, as well as the fulfilling of them. One thing asserted in the direction against this fundamental error, is, that it is *a way of salvation by the works of the law, and not by the faith of Christ, as revealed in the gospel :* though the maintainers of it would have us believe,

lieve, that it is the only way of the gospel ; that so we may not doubt of its power and efficacy for our justification, sanctification, and our whole salvation. Their reasons are, because the law, as a covenant of works, requireth to do all its commandments perfectly, that we may live ; whereas they plead only for a milder condition of sincere doing, that we may live. And they plead not for doing duties, as obliged thereunto by the authority of the law given of God by *Moses*, but only in obedience to the commands of Christ in the gospel. Neither do they plead for salvation by sincere obedience without Christ, but only by Christ, and through his merit and righteousness. And they acknowledge, that both salvation itself, and sincere obedience, are given to them freely, by the grace of Christ ; so that all is of grace. They acknowledge also, that their salvation is by faith, because sincere obedience is wrought in them by believing the gospel, and is included in the nature of that faith, which is the entire condition of our salvation : and some call it the resignating act of faith. But all these reasons are but a fallacious wizard upon a legal way of salvation, to make it look like pure gospel ; as I shall evince by the following particulars.

First, All that seek salvation by the sincere performance of good works, as the procuring condition, are condemned by the Apostle *Paul*, for seeking righteousness by the works of the law, and not by faith, *Rom. ix. 32.* and for seeking to be justified by the law, and falling from the grace of Christ, *Gal. v. 4.* The *Jews* and *Judaizing Christians*, against whom the Apostle chiefly disputeth in this whole controversy, did not profess any hope of being justified by perfect obedience, according to the rigour of the law, but only by such obedience as they accounted to be sincere, and not hypocritical. So that, if the Apostle had disputed against those that held only perfect obedience to be the condition of justification, he had contended with his own shadow. And they might as readily judge sincere obedience to be the condition of justification

under the law, as we can judge it to be the condition under the gospel. Neither doth the Apostle condemn them merely for accounting sincere obedience to the law as given by *Moses*, to be the condition of their justification, but more generally, for seeking salvation by their own works. And he alledgeth against them, that *Abraham*, who lived before the law of *Moses*, was not justified by any of his works, though he did perform sincere obedience; and that *David*, who lived under the law of *Moses*, was not justified by his works, though he performed sincere obedience, and was as much bound to obey the law given by *Moses*, as we are to obey any commands of Christ in the gospel, *Rom.* iv. 2. 3. 5. 6. Neither doth he condemn them for seeking their salvation only by works, without respecting at all the grace and salvation that is by Christ; for the *Judaizing Galatians* were yet professors of the grace and salvation of Christ, though they thought obedience to the law a necessary condition for the partaking of it, as also many other *Judaizing* believers did. And the most legal *Pharisees* would thank God for their good works, as proceeding from his grace, *Luke* xviii. 11. And they could as well acknowledge their salvation to be by faith, as the asserters of salvation by sincere obedience can in these days; for they accounted, that their sincere obedience was wrought in them by believing the word of God, which contained gospel as well as legal doctrine in it; and therefore that it must be included in the nature of faith, if faith were taken for the condition of their whole salvation. Let the asserters of the condition of sincere obedience learn from hence, that they are building again that *Judaism* which the Apostle *Paul* destroyed, whereby the *Jews* stumbled at Christ, *Rom.* ix. 32. and the *Galatians* were in danger of falling from Christ and grace, *Gal.* v. 2. 4; and let them beware of falling under that curse which he had denounced, on this very occasion, against any man or angel that shall preach any other gospel than that which he hath preached, *Gal.* i. 8. 9.

Secondly,

Secondly, The difference between the law and gospel doth not at all consist in this, that the one requireth perfect doing; the other, only sincere doing; but in this, that the one requireth doing; the other, no doing, but believing for life and salvation. Their terms are different, not only in degree, but in their whole nature.

The Apostle *Paul* opposeth the believing required in the gospel, to all doing for life, as the condition proper to the law, *Gal. iii. 12*. *The law is not of faith; but the man that doth them, shall live in them.* *Rom. iv. 5*. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* If we seek salvation by never so easy and mild a condition of works, we do thereby bring ourselves under the terms of the law, and do become debtors to fulfil the whole law in perfection, though we intended to engage ourselves only to fulfil it in part, *Gal v. 3*. for the law is a compleat declaration of the only terms whereby God will judge all that are not brought to despair of procuring salvation by any of their own works, and to receive it as a *gift* freely given to them by the *grace of God in Christ*. So that all that seek salvation, right or wrong, knowingly or ignorantly, by any works, less or more, whether invented by their own superstition, or commanded by God in the Old or New Testament, shall at last stand or fall according to those terms.

Thirdly, Sincere obedience cannot be performed to all the commands of Christ in the gospel, except it be also performed to the moral law, as given by *Moses*, and as obliging us by that authority. Some asserters of the condition of salvation by sincere obedience to the commands of Christ, would fain be free from the authority of the law of *Moses*, because that justifieth none, but thundereth out a curse against all those that seek salvation by the works of it, *Gal. iii. 10. 11.* But if they were at all justified by sincere works, their respect to *Moses*'s authority would not hinder their success; for many that were good Christians,

tians, accounted themselves bound to obey, not only the moral, but the ceremonial law; and, if they had sought justification by any works, they would have sought it by those, *Acts xx. 20. 21.* I know they object, that the ten commandments of the moral law, *the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones,* are also done away by Christ, *2 Cor. iii. 7.* But this maketh altogether against their conditional covenant: for they are the ministration of death, and done away, not as they commanded perfect obedience, foreven Christ himself commandeth us to be perfect, *Matth. v. 48;* but as they were conditions for procuring life, and avoiding death, established by a promise of life to the doers, and a curse to the breakers of them, *Gal. iii. 10. 12.* The law, as a covenant, doth still stand in force enough to curse those that seek salvation by their own works, *Gal. iii. 10;* and, if abolished, it is only to those that are in Christ by faith, *Gal. ii. 19. 20. Acts iii. 22.---25. and xv. 10. 11.* But the ten commandments bind us still, as they were then given to a people that were at that time under the covenant of grace made with *Abraham,* to shew them what duties are holy, just, and good, well pleasing to God, and to be a rule for their conversation. Their perfection indeed maketh them not only to be harder terms to procure life by, but a better rule to discover all imperfections, and to guide us to that perfection which we should aim at. And it will be our wisdom, not to part with the authority of the decalogue of *Moses,* until our new divines can furnish us with another system of morality as compleat as that, and as excellently composed and ordered by the wisdom of God, and more authentick than that is.

Fourthly, Those that endeavour to procure Christ's salvation by their sincere obedience to all the commands of Christ, do act contrary to that way of salvation by Christ, *free-grace,* and *faith,* discovered in the gospel, though they own it in profession never so highly.

1st, They act contrary to the way of salvation by Christ; for they would heal themselves, and save themselves from the power and pollution of sin, and procure God's favour, by performing sincere obedience, before they are come to Christ the only physician and saviour. They lay their own obedience lowest in the foundation of their salvation, and build the enjoyment of Christ upon it; who ought to be the only foundation. If we would be saved by Christ, we must own ourselves dead, lost sinners, that can have no righteousness for justification but his, no life or ability to do good, until God bring us to union and fellowship with him.

2dly, They do also act contrary to salvation by grace, according to the true meaning of the gospel. For we are not saved by grace, as the supreme cause of salvation, by the intervention of works, given and accepted by grace, as the procuring cause: in which sense we might be saved by grace, tho' by a covenant of works; as a servant that hath monies given him by his master, to purchase an annuity of his master at a low rate, may profess that he had an annuity given him freely, and yet that he hath purchased it, and may claim it as a due debt. But we are saved by grace, as the *immediate* and *compleat* cause of our *whole* salvation, excluding procurement of our salvation by the condition of works, and claiming it by any law as a due debt. The scripture teacheth us, that there is a perfect opposition and utter irreconcileableness between salvation by grace and works: *If by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but, if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work*, Rom. xi. 6. So also there is an opposition between a *reward reckoned of grace, and of debt*, Rom. iv. 4; between a promise of happiness *by the law, and by grace*, Rom. iv. 13. 16. God is so jealous of the glory of his *free grace*, that he will not save us by any *works*, tho' of his own working in us, *lest any man should boast*, Eph. ii. 9. He knoweth, when he healeth men by *physick*,

physick, or maintaineth them by the labour of their hands, they are prone to attribute the glory, rather to the means they use, than to his sole bounty and goodness.

3dly, They do also act contrary to the way of salvation by *faith*: for, as I have shewed already, the faith which is required for our salvation in the gospel, is to be understood in a sense contrary to doing good works as a condition to procure our salvation, that so the true difference between the terms of the law and of the gospel may be maintained. *Believing* is opposed to all *working* for salvation, and the *law of works* to the *law of faith*, Rom. iv. 5. and iii. 27. Eph. ii. 8. 9. Therefore we must not here consider faith as a *work* of righteousness, as comprehending any works of righteousness performed or done as a *condition* to procure a right and title to Christ, as the hand whereby we work, to earn him as our bread and drink, as our wages; but only as the *hand* whereby we *receive* Christ, as freely given to us, or as the *mouth* whereby we eat and drink him; as hath been proved. God giveth a sufficient right to receive Christ and his salvation, by the free gospel offer and invitation; so that he leaveth nothing for our faith to do, but to lay hold of him as a free gift, that the glory of our salvation may not be ascribed at all to our *faith* or *works*, but only to this *free grace* of God in Christ: *It is of faith, that it may be by grace*, Rom. iv. 16.

Fifthly, Christ or his Apostles never taught a gospel that requireth such a condition of works for salvation as they plead for. The texts of scripture which they usually alledge for their purpose, are either contrary to it, or widely distant from it; as they might learn from many *Protestant* interpreters, if their affection to a *Popish* tenet had not blinded them. I shall instance briefly only in a few of those texts, whereby you may have some light to judge of the true meaning of the rest. That *obedience of faith* mentioned by the Apostle *Paul* as the great design of gospel-preaching,

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Rom. i. 5. is as contrary to their condition of sincere obedience for salvation, as the *law of faith* is to the *law of works*, *Rom. iii. 27.* It is an obedience that consisteth in believing the report of the gospel ; as the Apostle explaineth himself, *Rom. x. 16.* *They have not all obeyed the gospel : for Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report ?* Faith is said to be imputed for righteousness, not because it is a work of righteousness itself, but because we do by it renounce all confidence in any righteous works whatsoever, and trust on him that *justifieth the ungodly* ; as is clear by that very text which they usually pervert for their purpose, *Rom. iv. 5.* They grossly pervert those words of *Paul*, *Rom. ii. 6. 7.* *Who will render to every man according to his deeds ; to them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality ; eternal life.* Where they will have *Paul* to be declaring the terms of the gospel, when he is evidently declaring the terms of the law, to prove, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are all under sin, and that no flesh can be justified by the works of the law ; as appeareth by the tenor of his following discourse, *Rom. iii. 9. 10.* They join evidently with the *Papists*, against the concurrent judgment of the best *Protestant* divines, in the interpretation of that text, *Jam. ii. 24.* *Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.* Where they will have *James* to deliver the doctrine of justification in more proper expressions than the Apostle *Paul*, who teacheth *justification by faith without works* ; though *Paul* treateth on this doctrine as his *principal* subject, and *James* doth only speak of it *occasionally*, as a motive to the practice of good works : whereby we may easily judge which of their expressions are to be taken for the most proper. *Protestants* have shewed sufficiently, that *James* speaketh not of a *true* saving faith, but of such a *dead* faith as devils have ; nor of *justification* in a *proper* sense, but of the *declaration* and *manifestation* of it by its fruits. They account also, that, when the happiness of heaven is called a *reward*, it must needs im-

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ply a procuring condition of works, as *Rev. xxii. 12. Matt. v. 12.* But though it be called a *reward*, because it is given after the doing of good works, and because it recompenseth good works, better than any wages upon earth can recompence a labourer; yet it is a *reward of grace, not of debt*, *Rom. iv. 4.* It is no proper wages, but a free gift, *Rom. vi. 23.* *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Another thing asserted in the direction is, That those that endeavour to perform this sincere obedience, as the condition to procure a right and title to Christ and his salvation, *shall never be able to perform sincerely any true obedience by all such endeavours.* They may restrain their corruptions, and bring themselves to many hypocritical slavish performances, whereby they may be esteemed among men as eminent saints; but they shall not be able to mortify one corruption, or to perform one duty in such a holy manner as God approveth. It will be sufficient for the proof of it, if I shew, that the practice of true holiness cannot possibly be attained unto, by *seeking to be saved by the works of the law*; because I have already proved, that this doctrine of salvation by sincere obedience, is according to the terms of the law, and not of the gospel. And hereby those also may see their error, that ascribe justification only to the gospel, and sanctification to the law. Yet, because those asserters of the condition of sincere obedience will hardly be persuaded by what hath been said, that it is the way of the law of works; I shall, for their more full conviction, sufficiently manifest, that *it is of no other nature and operation than any other doctrine that is proper to the law, and hath no better fruit*; as I proceed to prove, by the following arguments, that holiness cannot be attained by seeking it by the law of works, so that it may appear not worthy to be called gospel-doctrine.

17. The way of salvation by the works of the law is contrary and destructive to those necessary means of

an holy practice that have been laid down in the foregoing *directions*, and manifestly proved out of the holy scriptures. I have made it appear, that a hearty propensity to an holy practice cannot be attained without some good persuasion of our reconciliation with God by justification, and of our everlasting happiness, and of sufficient strength both to will and to perform our duty ; and that these, and all other endowments necessary to the same end, are to be had only in Christ, by union and fellowship with him ; and that Christ himself, with all his fulness, is united to us by faith ; which is not a condition to procure a right or title to Christ, but an instrument whereby we receive him actually into our hearts, by trusting on him for all salvation freely promised to us in the gospel. All these means of an holy practice are things wherein our spiritual life and happiness doth consist ; so that, if we have them, everlasting life is begun in us already : and, because they are the necessary means of an holy practice, therefore the beginning of everlasting life in us must not be placed after such a practice, as the fruit and consequent of it ; but must go before it, as the cause before the effect. Now, the terms of the law are directly contrary to this method. They place the practice of holiness before life, and make it to be the means and procuring cause of life ; as *Moses* describeth them, *Rom. x. 5.* *The man that doth those things, shall live by them.* By these terms, you are first to do the holy duties commanded, before you have any interest in the life promised, or any right to lay hold of it as yours by faith. And you must practise holiness without the forementioned means, or else you can never attain to them. Thus the true means are turned out of their office : and, instead of being causes, they are made to be the effects and fruits of an holy practice. And it will be in vain ever to expect such effects and fruits ; for holiness itself, with all its effects, must needs be destroyed, when its necessary causes are taken away. Therefore the Apostle *Paul* testifieth,

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that the way of salvation by the works of the law *maketh faith void, and the promises of none effect*; and *frustrateth the grace of God, as if Christ died in vain*; and *maketh Christ to be of no profit, and of none effect to us, as those that are fallen from grace*, Rom. iv. 14. Gal. ii. 21. and v. 2. 4. Let us now examine the modern doctrine of salvation by the condition of sincere obedience to all the commands of Christ, and we shall quickly find it to be a chip of the same block with the former legal way of salvation, in the same manner destructive to the means of holiness, and to holiness itself. It requireth of us the performance of sincere obedience, before we have the means necessary to produce it, by making it antecedent to our justification, and persuasion of eternal happiness, and our actual enjoyment of union and fellowship with Christ, and of that new nature which is to be had only in him by faith. It destroyeth the nature of that saving faith whereby we actually receive and enjoy Christ and all his benefits, and knocketh off our hands from laying hold of Christ and his salvation, by telling us still, as Christ told the legal worker after all his labour, that yet we lack something, *Mark x. 21*; that it is presumption to take him as our own, until we have performed the condition for our right and title to him; which is another kind of saving faith, othewise called *sincere obedience*. By this devised conditional faith, Satan keepeth many poor souls at a bay, poring upon their own hearts for many years together, to find whether they have performed the condition, and whether they have as yet any right to Christ for their salvation, not daring to venture to take him as their own. It is a strong partition-wall, that will certainly hinder the soul from coming to Christ, until it be thrown down by the knowledge of salvation by grace, without any procuring condition of works. And though it be accounted but as the payment of a pepper-corn for a great estate; yet it is enough to break the ablest man in the world, because it debarreth him from laying hold of the only

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effectual means of holiness, whereby that pepper-corn may be obtained.

2dly, Those that seek salvation by the works of the law, do therein act according to their natural state. They live and walk according to the flesh, or old man; not according to the new state, by Christ living in them. Their endeavours to procure an interest in Christ by their sincere obedience, do testify against themselves, that they do not act as people that are in Christ, but rather as people that judge themselves to be without an interest in Christ, and to be yet to seek for it. And sincere obedience is as impossible to be attained unto, as perfect obedience, if we act according to our dead natural state.

3dly, As the law bereaveth of all strengthening means, that are to be had by faith in Christ, and findeth us without strength in our natural state; so, of itself, it affordeth us no strength to fulfil its own commands: *If there had been a law given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law*, Gal. iii. 21. It doth not so much as promise us life, until we have performed the obedience required by it: *The man that doth those things, shall live by them*, Rom. x. 5. It is well called a *voice of words*, Heb. xii. 19; because its high and big words are not accompanied with any enlivening power. And the doctrine of life and salvation by sincere obedience is not better-natured, or more bountiful to us; for it exacteth of us the performance of the condition, before it alloweth us any life or salvation by Christ.

The word of God's grace, that requireth not holiness of us as a condition, but promiseth it to us as a free gift, must needs be the only doctrine *that is able to build us up, and to give us an inheritance among all them that are sanctified*, Acts xx. 32. Seeing it pleaseth God to bring us to holiness by believing a doctrine, we may reasonably expect that God should work upon us suitably to the nature of the doctrine which we believe; that he should give by a giving doctrine, and exact by an exacting doctrine.

4thly, The way of procuring life and happiness by the condition of perfect or sincere works, is not a rational method for the recovery of fallen man ; though it were good for the preserving of life before the fall : for it prescribeth the immediate practice of holiness to recover a man dead in sin ; as if one should say to the sick of the palsey, *Arise and walk, and then thou shalt be whole, and able to walk.* We sometimes say jestingly to a child that is fallen on the ground, *Come hither, and I will help thee up :* but, if we should say so to one that is cast on his bed by a dead palsey, we should be guilty of mocking and cruelly insulting the afflicted. Those that are humbled and made sensible of their original sin, and natural deadness, know that they must first live by the Spirit, before they can act holily, *Gal. v. 25.* And, if God suspend his love to us upon any condition, our love to him will not be absolute, but suspended upon the same condition, and no way contrary to an actual hating of him.

5thly, The law is so far from healing our sinful corruption, that it proveth rather an occasion of sinful motions and actings in those that seek salvation by the works of it. Those that find not this by their own experience, should believe the Apostle *Paul*, who teacheth it plainly, and that from his own experience, *Rom. vii. 5.* — 14. We find, by manifold experience, that though men be generally addicted to the principle of salvation by works ; yet multitudes of them hate all strict preachers and professors of true holiness, because they are a torment to their consciences. And, as far as I have observed, none more endeavour to discover the purity and perfection of the law, than those that seek holiness and salvation, without any legal condition, by the mere free grace of God in Christ. Therefore the doctrine of salvation by sincere obedience, that was invented against *Antinomianism*, may well be ranked among the worst *Antinomian* errors. For my part, I hate it with perfect hatred, and account it mine enemy, as I have found it to be. And I have found by some good experience

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the truth of the lesson taught by the Apostle, that the way to be freed from the mastery and dominion of sin, is, *not to be under the law, but under grace*, Rom. vi. 14.

6thly, The way of salvation by works was blasted by the curse denounced against the first *Adam's* sin; so that now it cannot work life in us, or holiness, but only death: for the law, which requireth both sincere and perfect obedience to God in all things, was made known to *Adam* at his first creation, as the means of continuing the happy life that was then bestowed upon him; and it would have been effectual for this end, if he had not transgressed in the forbidden fruit. But, when he had once brought himself and his posterity under the terrible sentence, *Thou shalt surely die*, Gen. ii. 17. all that knowledge of God, or his law, that before wrought for continuance of life, was turned by that cursing sentence the contrary way, to work for his death, even for the death of his soul in sin, as well as for the death of his body; and therefore it quickly moved him to hide himself from God as an enemy. It was as if God should say, *All the light and knowledge that thou hast, shall not be able to continue thy life, or restore it; but it shall rather tend to thy death*. Therefore while we continue in our natural state, under the first *Adam's* guilt and curse, the knowledge of the law, yea and all such knowledge of God and his attributes as natural men attain to, must needs be in like manner accursed to us. Hence we may conclude, that no truth known by the light of nature, can be an effectual principle or motive to work holiness in us; and gospel principles and motives are but abused, when they are applied to a legal way of salvation.

7thly, The end which God aimed at in giving the law to *Moses*, was not, that any should ever attain to holiness or salvation by the condition of perfect or sincere obedience to it; though, if there had been any such way of salvation at that time, it must have consisted in the performance of that law, which was

then given to the church to be a rule of life, as well as a covenant. There was another covenant made before that time with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, a covenant of grace, promising all blessings freely through Christ, the promised seed, by which only they were to be saved. And the covenant of the law was added, that they might see their sinfulness and subjection to death and wrath, and the impossibility of attaining to life or holiness by their works, and be forced to trust on the free promise only for all their salvation, and that sin might be restrained by the *spirit of bondage*, until the coming of that promised seed, Jesus Christ, and the more plentiful pouring out of the sanctifying Spirit by him. This the Apostle *Paul* sheweth largely, *Gal. iii. 15.—24. Rom. v. 20. 21. and x. 3. 4.*

DIRECTION VII.

We are not to imagine that our hearts and lives must be changed from sin to holiness in any measure before we may safely venture to trust on Christ for the sure enjoyment of himself, and his salvation.

EXPLICATION.

WE are naturally so prone to ground our salvation upon our own works, that, if we cannot make them procuring conditions and causes of our salvation by Christ, yet we shall endeavour at least to make them necessary preparatives to fit us for receiving Christ and his salvation by faith. And men are easily persuaded, that this is not at all contrary to salvation by free grace, because all that is hereby ascribed to our works, or good qualifications, is only, “that they put us in a fit posture to receive a free gift.” Many that behold with terror the abominations of their own hearts, are kept off from coming immediately to Christ, by such imaginations, which

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Satan strongly maintaineth and increaseth in them by his suggestions: so that they can by no means be persuaded out of them, until God teacheth them inwardly by the powerful illumination of his Spirit. They delay the saving act of faith, because they think they are not yet duly prepared and qualified for it. Against all such imaginations I shall propose the following considerations.

First, This error is pernicious to the practice of holiness, and to our whole salvation, in the same manner with that treated of in the foregoing direction, and may be confuted by the same arguments which are there produced. Whether holiness be made a procuring condition of our salvation through Christ, or only a condition necessary to qualify us for the reception of Christ, we are equally brought under those legal terms of doing first the duties required in the law, that so we may live. Therefore we are equally bereaved of the assistance of those means of holiness mentioned in the foregoing directions, as union and fellowship with Christ, and the enjoyment of all his sanctifying endowments by faith, which should go before the practice of holiness, that they may enable us for it; and we are equally left to labour in vain for holiness, while we are in our cursed natural state, whereby our sinful corruption will be rather exasperated than mortified; so that we shall never be duly prepared for the reception of Christ as long as we live in the world.

Secondly, Any the least change of our hearts and lives from sin to holiness before our receiving of Christ and his salvation by faith, is not at all necessary according to the terms of the gospel, nor required in the word of God. Christ would have the vilest sinners come to him for salvation immediately, without delaying the time to prepare themselves for him. Christ would have us to believe on him that justifieth the ungodly; and therefore he doth not require us to be godly before we believe, *Rom. iv. 5.* He came as a physician for the sick, and doth not expect that they

should recover their health in the least degree before they come to him, *Matth. ix. 12.* The vilest sinners are fitly prepared and qualified for this design; which is to shew forth the exceeding riches of grace, pardoning our sins, and saving us *freely*, *Eph. 5. 7.* For this end the law of *Moses* entered, that *the offence might abound*; that so, where *sin abounded*, *grace might much more abound*, *Com. v. 20.* He loved us in our most loathsome sinful pollution, so as to die for us; and much more will he love us in it, so as to receive us when we come to him for the purchased salvation. He hath given full satisfaction to the justice of God for sinners, that they might have all righteousness, and holiness, and all salvation, only by fellowship with him through faith. Therefore it is no affront to Christ, or slighting and contemning the justice and holiness of God, to come to Christ, while we are polluted sinners; but rather it is an affronting and contemning the saving grace, merit and fulness of Christ, if we endeavour to make ourselves righteous and holy before we receive Christ himself, and all righteousness and holiness in him by faith.

Thirdly, Those that receive Christ with an unfeigned faith, shall never want a wedding-garment to adorn them in the sight of God. *Faith* itself is very *precious* in the sight of God, and *most holy*, *2 Pet. i. 1. Jude ver. 20.* God loveth it, because it giveth the glory of our salvation only to the free grace of God in Christ, *Rom. iv. 16*, and renounceth all dependence upon any conditions that we can perform to procure a right to Christ, or to make ourselves acceptable to him. It containeth in it an hearty love to Christ as a favour, and an hungering and thirsting appetite for his salvation; and it is the mouth whereby the soul feedeth hungrily upon him. But yet we see that the excellency of faith lieth in this, that it accounteth not itself, nor any other work of ours, a sufficient ornament to make us acceptable in the sight of God. It will not be our wedding-garment itself, but it buyeth of Christ *white raiment*, that we may be cloathed, and

and that *the shame of our nakedness may not appear*, Rev. iii. 18. Though it loveth and desireth the free gift of holiness ; yet it abandons all thoughts of practising holiness immediately, before we come to Christ for an holy nature. It putteth on Christ himself, and in him all things that pertain to life and godliness. Thus every true believer is *cloathed with the sun*, Rev. xii. 1. even with the *sun of righteousness*, the Lord Jesus ; who is pleased to be himself both our wedding-garment and feast, and all our spiritual and eternal happiness.

For the more full satisfaction and consolation of those distressed souls that lie under the terrible apprehensions of their own sinfulness and the wrath of God, and dare not venture to trust stedfastly on Christ for their salvation, until they can find in themselves some change from sin to holiness ; I shall mention particularly several of those things that such would find in themselves : and I shall shew, that, if some of them be not partly comprehended in faith itself, they are *fruits and consequences of faith*, and therefore they cannot be rationally expected before we trust on Christ for our salvation.

1st, They think it necessary to *repent* before they believe on Christ for their salvation, because repentance is absolutely necessary to salvation, *Luke xiii. 3. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish* ; and Christ placeth the duty of repentance before faith, *Mark i. 15. Repent, and believe the gospel*. But we are to know, that Christ requireth repentance first as the end to be aimed at, and faith in the next place, as the only means of attaining to it ; and though the end be first in intention, yet the means are first in practice and execution, though both be absolutely necessary to salvation. For what is repentance, but an hearty turning from sin to God and his service ? and what way is there to turn to God, but through Christ, *who is the way, the truth, and the life; without whom none cometh to the Father* ? *John xiv. 9*; and what way is there of coming to Christ but by Faith ? There-

fore, if we would turn to God in the right way, we must first come to Christ by faith; and faith must go before repentance, as the great instrument afforded us by the grace of God for the effectual performance of it. Repentance is indeed a duty which sinners owe naturally to God; but the great question is, How shall sinners be able to perform it? This question is resolved only by the gospel of Christ, *Repent and believe*. The way to repent is, to begin with believing. Therefore the great doctrine of *John*, in his baptism of repentance, was, That they *should believe on him that should come after him*, that is, Christ Jesus, *Acts xix. 4.*

2dly, *Regeneration* is also necessary to salvation, *John iii. 3*; and therefore many would find it wrought in themselves before they trust on Christ for salvation. But consider what regeneration is. It is a new begetting or creating us in Christ, *1 Cor. iv. 15. Eph. ii. 10.* in whom we are partakers of a divine nature, far different from that which we received from the first *Adam*. Now, faith is the uniting grace whereby Christ dwelleth in us, and we in him; as hath been shewed; and therefore it is the first grace wrought in our regeneration, and the means of all the rest: when you truly believe, you are regenerated, and not till then. Those that receive Christ by believing, and those only, are the sons of God, *which are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*, *John i. 12. 13.*

3dly, They account it necessary to receive Christ as *Lord* and *Lawgiver*, by a sincere resignation of themselves to his government, and a resolution to obey his law, *before* they receive him as their saviour. And I own it as a certain truth, that Christ will save none but those that are brought to resign themselves sincerely to the obedience of his royal authority and laws. But yet we must observe, that they are not brought to this holy resignation, or to any sincere purpose and resolution of obedience, before they receive his salvation, but rather by receiving it.

4thly,

4thly, It seemeth to them evident, that some good works are necessary, before we can trust on Christ safely for the forgiveness of sins; because our Saviour teacheth us, that, if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our heavenly Father forgive our trespasses; and directeth us to pray, *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*, Math. vi. 12. 15. A lively faith cannot be without these fruits, and therefore we cannot pray, or partake of sacraments, in faith, without them; but yet, if we strive to do either of these before we trust on Christ for our pardon and salvation, we shall do them slavishly and hypocritically, not in an holy acceptable manner.

5thly, I shall reckon up together several other qualifications that distressed souls would find in themselves, that they may be duly prepared to trust on Christ for their salvation; and when they have laboured anxiously a long time, and cannot get them, at last they lie down in sorrowful despondence, not daring to apply the consolations of the grace of God in Christ to their wounded consciences. Let perplexed souls mark the particulars, and observe whether the condition of their own souls be reached in any of them. *O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted*, what good qualifications are they that thou wouldst have, that thou mayest be encouraged to lay hold on Christ for salvation? It is likely thou wilt answer, in the bitterness of thy soul, “ O let me have first some love “ to God and godliness in mine heart, and freedom “ from mine hateful heart-risings against him and his “ service! Let me have some good thoughts of God, “ his justice, mercy, holiness, that I may be able “ to justify him though he damn me, and that I may “ not be filled with murmuring and hellish blasphemies in my mind against him. Let the raging of “ my lusts be abated, and the stinking kennel of my “ wicked heart a little cleansed. Let me have some “ holy reverential fear of God, and not only a pan-“ nick tormenting horror. I would be more affected “ with the wrath of God, and not be of a slighting “ heedless

“ heedless spirit. I would be more humbled for sin, “ lothe it, and be ashamed of it, and be sorry for it “ with a godly sorrow, not merely because of the “ punishment, but because it grieveth and vexeth the “ Holy Spirit of God. I would be able to make a “ willing and ingenuous confession of sin, and to “ pour out my soul to the Lord in lively affection- “ ate prayer for forgiveness, and to praise and glo- “ rify him heartily; and not be like a lifeless stone “ in the duty of prayer, as I am.” Are these the things thou desirest, O poor distressed soul? The best reply I can make for thy speedy comfort, is, to inform thee, that the things are good, but thy desires are not well timed. It is unreasonable for thee to expect these holy qualifications, whilst thou art in thy natural state, under the guilt of sin, and the apprehension of the wrath of God, before thou hast received the atonement, and the new spiritual life that is by Christ through faith in his name. Thou dost but exasperate thy corruptions, and harden thy heart, and make thy wounds to stink the more because of thy foolishness. Such good qualifications are included in the nature of faith, and for the most part they follow after it; so that they cannot possibly be obtained before thou trustest in Christ for thy salvation; as I shall shew concerning them particularly in their order. A love to the salvation of God, and to the free gift of holiness, is included in the nature of faith; so that it cannot be hearty without it. Act faith first, and the apprehension of God’s love to thy soul will sweetly allure and constrain thee to love God and his service universally; *We love him because he loved us first*, 1 John iv. 19. We cannot be beforehand with God in love; and we must perceive his love, to make us love him: for, if we look upon him as a God contrary to us, that hateth us, and will damn us, our own innate self-love will breed hatred and heart-risings against him, in spite of our hearts. That love which is the *end of the law*, must flow from *faith unfeigned*, 1 Tim. i. 5. And, if ha-
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tered work in thee more than love, how canst thou expect good thoughts of God, or any other than blaspheming, or at least murmuring thoughts of him, in this condition? Ill-will never speaketh or thinketh well. The first right holy thoughts thou canst have of God, are thoughts of his grace and mercy to thy soul in Christ, which are included in the grace of faith. Get these thoughts first by believing in Christ, and they will breed in thee love to God, and all good thoughts of him, and free thee from blasphemous and murmuring thoughts by degrees; for *love thinks no evil*, 1 Cor. xiii. 5. The way to get rid of thy raging lusts, is by *faith*, that *turifieth the heart, and worketh by love*, Acts xv. 9. Gal. 5. 6. The soul must be brought to take pleasure in God and Christ by faith, or else it will lust after fleshly and worldly pleasures. And the more you strive against lusts without faith, the more they are stirred up; though you prevail so far as to restrain the fulfilling of them. Beg a holy fear of God, with *fear of coming short of the promised rest through unbelief*, Heb. iv. 1. Such a fear is an ingredient of faith, and it will breed in us a reverential, yea a child-like fear of God and his goodness, Heb. xii. 28. Hos. iii. 5. *We must have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence, &c.* It is in the margin, *We must have or hold fast grace*. And there is no other way to *hold fast grace* but by *faith*; and this will quickly calm all pannick and tormenting horror. And, if you would be free from carelessness, and slighting the wrath of God, your way is, first, by believing, to avoid despairing: for people grow careless by despairing; and, for their own quiet, they will endeavour to slight evils which they have no hope to prevent; according to the proverb, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*, 1 Cor. xv. 32. True humiliation for sin is either a part or fruit of faith; for, on our believing, *we shall remember our own evil ways, and doings that were not good, and shall lothe ourselves in our own sight for all our abominations*, Ezek. xxxvi. 31. We shall also then willingly

willingly renounce our own righteousness, and account it but dung, that we may win Christ by faith, *Psal. iii. 7. 8.* But beggars will make the most of their nasty rags, till they be furnished with better cloaths; and cripples will not cast away their crutches, until they have a better support to lean on. Godly sorrow for sin is wrought in us by believing the pardoning grace of God; as it is found by experience, that a pardon from a prince will sometimes sooner draw tears from a stubborn malefactor, than the fear of a halter will. Thus the sinful woman was brought to wash Christ's feet with her tears, *Luke vii. 37. 38.* We are not like to be sorry for grieving God with our sins, while we look upon him as an enemy that will ease himself well enough of his burthen, and right himself upon us by our everlasting destruction. The belief of God's pardoning and accepting grace, is a necessary means to bring us to an ingenuous confession of sins. The people freely confessed their sins, when they were baptized of *John* in *Jordan*, for the remission of sins, *Mark i. 4. 5.* The confession of despairers is forced, like the extorted confessions and cryings out of malefactors upon the rack. A pardon sooner openeth the mouth to an ingenuous confession, than *Confess and be hanged, or Confess and be damned.* Therefore, if you would freely confess your sins, believe first, that *God is faithful and just to forgive your sins through Christ, 1 John i. 9.* And, if you would pray to God, or praise him, with lively affections, you must first believe, that God will hear you, and give you what is best for you for *Christ's sake, John xvi. 23. 24;* otherwise your praying will be only from the teeth outward; for *how shall you call on him in whom you have not believed? Rom. x. 14.* You must come first to Christ the altar by faith, that, by him, you may offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, *Heb. xiii. 10. 15.*

D I R E C T I O N . VIII.

Be sure to seek for holiness of heart and life only in its due order, where God hath placed it, after union with Christ, justification, and the gift of the Holy Ghost; and, in that order, seek it earnestly by faith, as a very necessary part of your salvation.

E X P L I C A T I O N .

I Hope the reader will observe warily in all these directions, that the *holiness* aimed at as the great end in the whole discourse, consisteth not in the grace or act of *faith* required peculiarly by the gospel; which, though it be a saving gift of Christ, yet is here considered rather as a *means* precedent to the reception of Christ, and all his salvation, than a part of his salvation received.

Now, in this direction, *three* things are contained that are very necessary to guide us to the attainment of this great end, and therefore worthy of our serious consideration.

First, It is a matter of high concern, to be acquainted with the due place and order wherein God hath settled this holy practice in the mystery of our salvation, and a great point of Christian wisdom to seek it only in that order. We know that God is the God of order, and that his infinite wisdom hath appeared in appointing the order of his creatures, which we are forced to observe for attainment of our ends in worldly things; so also in spiritual things: *God hath made an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. The benefits of it have an orderly dependence each upon other, as links of the same golden chain, though several of them, and a title to them all, are given to us at one and the same time. And I think enough hath been said already, to shew in what order God brings us to the practice of the moral law. **H**e maketh us first to be in Christ by faith, as branches in the vine, that we may bring forth much fruit, John

xv. 4. 5. He first purgeth our consciences from dead works by justification, *that we may serve the living God*, Heb. ix. 14. He maketh us first to *live in the Spirit*, and then to *walk in the Spirit*, Gal. v. 25. This is the order prescribed in the gospel, which is *the power of God unto salvation*; though the law prescribeth a quite contrary method, that we should first perform its commands, that so we may be justified and live; and thereby it proveth a *killing letter* to us. Now, mark well the great advantages you have for the attainment of holiness, by seeking it in a right gospel-order. You will have the advantage of the love of God manifested toward you, in forgiving your sins, receiving you into favour, and giving you the spirit of adoption, and the hope of his glory, freely, through Christ, to persuade and constrain you, by sweet allurements, to love God again, who hath so dearly loved you, and to love others for his sake, and to give up yourselves to the obedience of all his commands out of hearty love to him; you will also enjoy the help of the Spirit of God, to incline you powerfully unto obedience, and to strengthen you for the performance of it against all your corruptions, and the temptations of Satan: so that you will have both wind and tide to forward your voyage in the practice of holiness. Contrariwise, if you rush upon the immediate performance of the law, without taking Christ's righteousness and his Spirit in the way to it, you will find both wind and tide against you: your guilty consciences, and corrupt dead natures, will certainly defeat and frustrate all your enterprizes and attempts to love God, and serve him in love, and you will but stir up sinful lusts, instead of stirring up yourselves to true obedience; or, at best, you will but attain to some slavish and hypocritical performances. Oh! that people would be persuaded to consider the due place of holiness in the mystery of salvation, and to seek it only there where they have all the advantage of the gospel-grace to find it. Many miscarry in their zealous enterprizes for godliness; and,

and, after they have spent much labour in vain, God maketh a breach upon them, even to their everlasting destruction, as he did upon *Uzzah*, to a temporal destruction; *because they sought him not after a due order*, 1 Chron. xiii. 10.

Secondly, We are to look upon *holiness as a very necessary part of that salvation that is received by faith in Christ*. Many are prone to imagine nothing else to be meant by salvation, but to be delivered from hell, and to enjoy heavenly happiness and glory: hence they conclude, that, if good works be a means of glorification, and precedent to it, they must also be a precedent means to our whole salvation; and that, if they be not a necessary means of our whole salvation, they are not at all necessary to glorification. But though salvation be often taken in scripture, by way of eminency, for its perfection in the state of heavenly glory; yet, according to its full and proper signification, we are to understand by it, all that freedom from the evil of our natural corrupt state, and all those holy and happy enjoyments that we receive from Christ our Saviour, either in this world by faith, or in the world to come by glorification. Thus, justification, the gift of the Spirit to dwell in us, the privileges of adoption, are parts of our salvation, which we partake of in this life. Thus also, the conformity of our hearts to the law of God, and *the fruits of righteousness with which we are filled by Jesus Christ in this life*, are a necessary part of our salvation. Can we rationally doubt, whether it be any proper part of our salvation by Christ, to be quickened, to live to God, when we were *by nature dead in trespasses and sins*? Though we are not saved by good works, as procuring causes; yet we are saved to good works, as fruits and effects of saving grace; *which God hath prepared that we should walk in them*, Eph. ii. 10. It is indeed one part of our salvation, to be delivered from the bondage of the covenant of works; but the end of this is, not that we may have liberty to sin, (which is the worst of slavery); but that we may ful-

fil the royal law of liberty, and that we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter, Gal. v. 13. Rom. vii. 6.

The third and last thing to be noted in this direction, is, *That holiness of heart and life is to be sought for earnestly by faith, as a very necessary part of our salvation.* Great multitudes of ignorant people, that live under the gospel, harden their hearts in sin, and ruin their souls for ever, by trusting on Christ for such an imaginary salvation, as confissteth not at all in holiness, but only in forgiveness of sin, and deliverance from everlasting torments. The way to oppose this pernicious delusion is, not to deny, as some do, that trusting on Christ for salvation is a saving act of faith; but rather to shew, that none can do or can trust on Christ for true salvation, except they trust on him for holiness: neither do they heartily desire true salvation, if they do not desire to be made holy and righteous in their hearts and lives. If ever God and Christ give you salvation, holiness will be one part of it; if Christ *wash* you not from the filth of your sins, *you have no part with him*, John xiii. 8. What a strange kind of salvation do they desire, that care not for holiness? They would be saved, and yet be altogether *dead in sin, aliens from the life of God*, bereft of the image of God, deformed by the image of Satan, his slaves, and vassals to their own filthy lusts, utterly unmeet for the enjoyment of God in glory. Such a salvation as that, was never purchased by the blood of Christ; and those that seek it, *abuse the grace of God in Christ, and turn it into lasciviousness.* True gospel-faith maketh us come to Christ with a thirsty appetite, that we may *drink of living water*, even of his sanctifying Spirit, John vii. 37. 38; and to cry out earnestly to save us, not only from hell, but from sin; saying, *Teach us to do thy will; thy Spirit is good*, Psal. cxliii. 10; *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned*, Jer. xxxi. 18; *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me*, Psal. li. 10. 'This is the way whereby the doctrine of salvation by

grace

grace doth necessitate us to holiness of life, by constraining us to seek for it by faith in Christ, as a substantial part of that salvation which is freely given to us through Christ.

DIRECTION IX.

We must first receive the comforts of the gospel, that we may be able to perform sincerely the duties of the law.

EXPLICATION.

WE are by nature so strongly addicted to the legal method of salvation, that it is a hard matter to dissuade those that live under the light of the gospel, from placing the duties of the law before the comforts of the gospel. If they cannot make salvation itself, yet they will be sure to make all the comforts of it to depend upon their own works. They think it as unreasonable to expect comfort before duty, as wages before work, or the fruits of the earth before the husbandman's labour, 2 Tim. ii. 7. They account the only effectual way to secure the obedience we owe to the law of God, is, to ground all our comforts on the performance of it; and that the contrary doctrine strengthens the hands of the wicked, by prophesying peace to them, where there is no peace, Ezek. xiii. 16. 22.; and openeth the floodgates to all licentiousness. Therefore some preachers will advise men not to be solicitous and hasty in getting comfort, but that they should rather exercise themselves diligently in the performance of their duty: and they tell them, that, in so doing, their condition will be safe and happy at last, though they never enjoy any comfort of their salvation, as long as they live in this world.

That you may rightly understand what I have asserted in the direction against such vulgar errors, take notice, that I do not make the *only* place of gospel-comfort to be before the duties of the law. I acknowledge, that God comforteth his people on every

side, Psal. lxxi. 21. Neither do I hereby speak any peace to those that continue in their sinful natural state: for the comforts I speak of, cannot be received without rejecting those false confidences whereby natural men harden themselves in sin; nor without that effectual working of the Spirit, whereby we are made good trees, that we may bring forth good fruit; and they are no other than comforts of those spiritual benefits by which our new estate and nature is produced, and of which it is constituted and made up; as the comforts of redemption, justification, adoption, the gift of the Spirit, and the like. Neither do I intend here any transport or ravishment of joy and delight, but only such manner of comfort, as rationally strengthens, in some measure, against the oppression of fear, grief, and despair, which we are liable unto, by reason of our natural sinfulness and misery. This explanation of the sense of my assertion, is sufficient to answer some common objections against it. And I hope the truth of it will be fully evidenced by the following arguments.

First, This truth is a clear consequence from those principles of holiness that have been already confirmed. Can we be persuaded of the love of God, of our everlasting happiness, and our strength to serve God, and yet be without any comforts? Can the glad tidings of the gospel of peace be believed, and Christ and his Spirit actually received into the heart, without any relief to the soul from oppressing fear, grief, and despair? Can the salvation of Christ be comfortless, or the bread and water of life without any sweet relish, to those that feed on him, with hungering and thirsting appetites? God will not give such benefits as these to those that do not desire and esteem them above the world. And certainly the very receiving of them will be comfortable to such, except they receive them blindfold; which they cannot do, when the very giving and bestowing them, openeth the eyes of a sinner, and turns him from darkness to light, whereby he doth, at least in some measure, see and perceive

perceive spiritually the things that concern his present and future peace, and reap some encouraging and strengthening comfort thereby to the practice of holiness.

Secondly, Peace, joy, hope, are recommended to us in scripture, as the spring of other holy duties; and fear and oppressing grief forbidden, as hindrances to true religion: *The peace of God keepeth our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*, Phil. iv. 7. *Be ye not sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength*, Neh. viii. 10. *Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure*, 1 John iii. 3. *Fear bath torment: he that feareth, is not made perfect in love*, 1 John iv. 18. This is the reason why the Apostle doubleth his exhortation, to *rejoice in the Lord always*, as a duty of exceeding weight and necessity, Phil. iv. 4. Therefore we must make haste, in the first place, to get a comfortable frame of spirit, if we would *make haste, and not delay, to keep God's holy commandments*.

Thirdly, The usual method of gospel-doctrine, as it is delivered to us in the holy scriptures, is, first to comfort our hearts, and thereby to *establish us in every good word and work*, 2 Thess. ii. 17. And it appears how clearly this method is adjusted in several epistles written by the Apostles, wherein they first acquaint the churches with the rich grace of God towards them in Christ, and the spiritual blessings which they are made partakers of, for their strong consolation; and then they exhort them to an holy conversation answerable to such privileges; which comfortable benefits must first be believed, and the comfort of them applied to our own souls, or else they will not be forcible to engage us to the practice for which they are intended. To give you a few instances out of a multitude that might be alledged; we are exhorted to practise holy duties, because *we are dead to sin, and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. vi. 11.; and because *sin shall not have dominion over us: for we are not under the law, but under grace*, Rom. vi. 14.; because *we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit*;

and God will quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit dwelling in us, Rom. viii. 9. 11. ; because our bodies are the members of Christ, and the temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 15. 19. ; because God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. ; and hath promised, that he will dwell in us, and walk in us, and be to us a father, and we shall be to him sons and daughters, 2 Cor. vi. 18. , and chap. vii. 1. ; because God hath forgiven us for Christ's sake ; and accounteth us his dear children ; and Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us ; and we that were sometimes darkness, are now light in the Lord, Eph. iv. 32. ; and v. 1. 2. 8. ; because we are risen with Christ ; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory, Col. iii. 4. ; because God hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, Heb. xiii. 5. ; because of the many promises made to us, 2 Cor. vii. 1. Search the scriptures, and you may, with delight, see that this is the vein that runneth through gospel-exhortations ; and you may find the like vein of comfort running through the prophetical exhortations in the Old Testament. And this is a method agreeable to the design of the gospel ; which is to advance the riches of the grace of God in all our spiritual enjoyments. God will give us his consolations before our good works, as well as after them, that we may know, that he giveth us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, and not through the procurement of our works, 2 Theff. ii. 16.

Fourthly, The nature of the duties of the law require a comfortable state of soul for the performance of them. Can we love God, and delight in him above all, while we look upon him as our everlasting enemy, and apprehend no love and mercy in him towards us, that may render him a suitable good for us, and lovely in our eyes ? What doleful melody will the heart make in the duty of praise, if we account that all those perfections for which we praise him, will rather aggravate our misery, than make us happy ? What

What a heartless work will it be to pray to him, and to offer up our ourselves to his service, if we have no comfortable hope that he will accept us? Is it possible for us to free ourselves from carking cares, by casting our care upon the Lord, if we do not apprehend he careth for us? Can we be patient in affliction with chearfulness, and under persecutions, except *we have peace with God, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God?* Rom. v. 1. 2. 3. What reason can persuade us to submit willingly, according to our duty, to the stroke of present death, if God be pleased to lay it upon us, when we have no comforts to relieve us against the horrible fear of intolerable torments in hell for ever?

Fifthly, The state of those that are to be brought from sin to godliness, requires necessarily, that, after they be convinced of the vanity of their former false confidences, and of their deadnes in original sin, and subjection to the wrath of God, they should have a supply of new gospel-comforts afforded, to encourage their fainting souls to holy practices. How unreasonable is it to prescribe the immediate practice of love to God, and universal obedience to him out of love as the means of cure, for those that see nothing but wrath and enmity in God towards them in their present condition; What is it but to require a man to work without strength, promising him, that he shall have strength when his work is done? for *comfort or joy* is so called, because it *strengtheth*, Neh. viii. 10. True it is, that the law, which is the *ministration of condemnation*, obligeth them to obedience; but our merciful God expecteth no sincere performance of his law, from such impotent miserable wretches, till he hath first delivered them, in some measure, from those discomforts, slavish fears, and despondencies, that hold them captive under the law of sin and death: we may require a strong healthy person, first to work, and then to expect meat, drink, and wages; but a fainting, famished person, must first have food, or a

reviving cordial, to strengthen his heart, before he can work.

Sixtly, Both scripture and experience shew, that this is the method whereby God bringeth his people from sin to holiness. God gave to *Adam*, at his first creation, the comfort of his love and favour, and the happiness of paradise, to encourage him to obedience; and, when he had lost those comforts by the fall, he was no longer able to obey, until he was restored by new comfort of the promised seed. Christ, the second *Adam*, set *God always before his face*; and he knew, that, because *God was at his right hand, he should not be moved; therefore his heart was glad, and his glory rejoiced*, Psal. xvi. 8. 9. This made him willing to bear his agony and bloody sweat, and to be *obedient unto death, even the death of the cross*. God drew the *Israelites to obedience with the cords of a man, with the bands of love, by taking off the yoke on their jaws, and laying meat before them*, Hos. xi. 4. *David telleth us, for our instruction, how he was brought to an holy conversation: Thy loving kindness is before mine eyes: and I have walked in thy truth*, Psal. xxvi. 3.; *Lord, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments*, Psal. cxix. 166. We have several examples in the New Testament of the joy that sinners had in the first receiving of Christ, *Acts ii. 41*. And, when the gospel first came to the *Theffalonians, they received the word in much affliction, with joy in the holy Ghost*, *1 Theff. i. 4. 5. 6. When the Gentiles heard the word of God, they were glad: and as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed*, *Acts xiii. 48*. The Apostle *Paul* was constrained by the love of Christ, to give up himself to live to Christ, *2 Cor. v. 14. 15*. I dare appeal to the experience of any that obey God out of hearty love. Let them examine themselves, and consider, whether they were brought to give up themselves to serve God in love, without comfortable apprehensions of the love of God towards them? I dare say there are no such prodigies in the new birth.

Seventhly,

Seventhly, What comfortless religion do those make, that allow people no comfort before-hand, to strengthen them for holy performances, which are very cross, displeasing, and grievous to their natural inclinations, as the plucking out a right eye, cutting off a right hand ; but would have them first to do such things with love and delight, under all their present fears, despontencies, and corrupt inclinations, and to hope, that, by doing the work thoroughly and sincerely, they shall at last attain to a more comfortable state ? All true spiritual comfort, as well as salvation, is indeed quite banished out of the world, if it be suspended upon the condition of our good works ; which hath already appeared to be the condition of the law, that *worketh no comfort, but wrath*, Rom. iv. 14. 15. This makes the ways of godliness odious to many. An uncomfortable gospel cannot proceed from God the Father, who is the *Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort*, 2 Cor. i. 3. ; nor from Christ, who is the *consolation of Israel*, Luke ii. 25. ; nor from the *Spirit*, who is the *comforter*, John xiv. 17. God *meeteth him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness*. Isa. Ixiv. 5. No sorrow is approved of by God, except *godly sorrow*, which can never be in us without some comfort of the love of God towards us. They that are offended at the uncomfortablenes of a religious life, never yet knew the true way of religion ; else they would find, that the *ways of wisdom, are ways of pleasantnes, and all her paths peace*, Prov. iii. 17.

D I R E C T I O N X.

That we may be prepared by the comforts of the gospel to perform sincerely the duties of the law, we must get some assurance of our salvation in that very faith whereby Christ himself is received into our hearts : therefore we must endeavour to believe on Christ confidently, persuading and assuring ourselves, in the act of believing, that God freely giveth to us an interest

in Christ and his salvation, according to his gracious promise.

E X P L I C A T I O N.

TH E eyes of men in these late years have been blinded in point of *assurance* by many false imaginations. They think, because salvation is not promised to us absolutely, but upon condition of believing on Christ for it; therefore we must first believe directly on Christ for our salvation, and, after that, we must reflect our minds upon our faith, and examine it by several marks and signs, especially by the fruit of sincere obedience; and if, upon this examination, we find out certainly, that it is true saving faith, then, and not before, we may *believe assuredly*, that we in particular shall be saved. On this account they say, that our salvation is by the *direct*, and our *assurance* by the *reflex* act of faith; and that many have true faith, and shall be saved, that never have any *assurance* of their salvation as long as they live in this world. They find, by scripture and experience, that many precious saints of God are frequently troubled with doubtings, whether they shall be saved, and whether their faith and obedience be sincere, so that they cannot see *assurance* in themselves: therefore they conclude, that *assurance* must not be accounted absolutely necessary to justifying faith and salvation, lest we should make the hearts of doubting saints sad, and drive them to despair. They account that former *Protestants* were guilty of a manifest absurdity, in making *assurance* to be of the nature and definition of saving faith; because all that hear the gospel, are bound to saving faith, and yet they are not bound absolutely to believe, that they themselves shall be saved; for then many of them would be bound to believe that which is not declared in the gospel concerning them in particular; yea that which is a plain lie, because the gospel sheweth, that many of those that are called, are not chosen to salvation, but perish for ever,

ever, *Matth. xx. 16.* No wonder if the appearance of so great an absurdity move many to imagine, that *saving faith is a trusting or resting on Christ as the only sufficient means of salvation, without any assurance*; or, that *it is a desiring and venturing to trust or rely upon him, in a mere state of suspence and uncertainty concerning our salvation, or with a probable opinion or conjectural hope of it at best.*

Another *objection* against this doctrine of *assurance*, is, *That it destroyeth self-examination; bringeth forth the evil fruits of pride and arrogancy, as if they knew their places in heaven already before the day of judgment; causeth carelessness of duty, carnal security, all manner of licentiousness.* And this maketh them commend doubtfulnes of our salvation, as necessary to maintain in us humility, religious fear, watchfulness, much searching and trying our spiritual state and ways, diligence in good works, and all devotion.

Against all these *contrary imaginations*, I shall endeavour to maintain this ancient *protestant* doctrine of *assurance*, which I have expressed in the direction. And, *first*, I shall lay down some observations for the right understanding of it; which will be sufficient to turn the edge of the strongest *objections* that can be made against it.

First, Observe diligently, that the *assurance* directed unto, is *not* a persuasion that we have *already* received Christ and his salvation, or that we have been *already* brought into a state of grace; but only, that *God is pleased graciously to give Christ and his salvation unto us, and to bring us into a state of grace, though we have been altogether in a state of sin and death until this present time*: so that this doctrine doth not at all tend to breed presumption in wicked and unregenerate men, that their state is good *already*; but only encourageth them to come to Christ *confidently* for a good state. This kind of *assurance* which I speak of, answereth not the question, *Whether I am already in a state of grace and salvation?* There is another great question that

that the soul must answer, that it may get into a state of grace, *Whether God be graciously pleased now to bestow Christ and his salvation upon me, though I have been hitherto a very wicked creature?* We must be sure to resolve this question comfortably, by another kind of assurance in the direct act of faith, wherein we are to persuade ourselves, (without reflecting upon any good qualifications in ourselves) that God is ready graciously to receive us into the arms of his mercy in Christ, notwithstanding all our former wickedness, according to that gracious promise, *I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her, beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called, the children of the living God,* Rom. ix. 23, 26.

Secondly, The assurance directed unto, is not a persuasion of salvation, whatever we do, or however we live and walk; but only in a limited way through mere free grace in Christ, by partaking of holiness as well as forgiveness, and by walking in the way of holiness to the enjoyment of the glory of God. And how can a persuasion of salvation in a way of holiness, breed slothfulness in duty, carelessness and licentiousness? It doth rather mightily allure us, and stir us up to be always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as we know, that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. xv. 58. They that are persuaded of the free grace of God toward them in Christ, are not indeed solicitous about earning their salvation by their own legal works. And Satan is ready to suggest to them, that this is a sinful carelessness, and tendeth to licentiousness. But they that will believe this false suggestion of Satan, shew plainly, that they do not yet know what it is to serve God in love, and that they are held in, to all their obedience, by the bit and bridle of slavish fear, *as the horse and mule, that have no understanding,* Psal. xxxii. 9.

Thirdly, Beware of thinking so highly of this assurance, as if it were inconsistent with any doubting in the same

same soul. True indeed, this *assurance* must be *contrary to doubtings* in the *nature* of it; yet, if at that time one can blame his soul for *doubting*, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him*, Pial. xlvi. 11. if he can condemn his *doubtings* as *sinful*, and say with himself, *This is my infirmity*, Psal. lxxvii. 10. these *doubtings* are of the *flesh*, and of the *devil*; if he still endeavour to call God, *father*, I say, that such an one hath *some true assurance*, though he must strive to grow to a *higher degree*; for, if he were not *persuaded* of the *truth* of the *love* of God towards him, he could not rationally condemn his *fears* and *doubts* concerning it as *sinful*; neither could he rationally pray to God as his *father*, or that God would *assure* him of that *love* that he doth not think to be *true*. Do but grant that it is the *nature* of *saving faith*, thus to *resist* and *struggle* with *slavish fears* of *wrath*, and *doubting* of our own *salvation*; and you grant, in *effect*, that there is, and must be *something* of *assurance* of our *salvation* in *saving faith*, whereby it *resisteth doubtings*; and you are, in *effect*, of the same judgment with me in the *assertion*, however *strange* my *expressions* seem to you.

Fourthly, In the *last place*, Let it be well observed, that the reason why we are to *assure* ourselves in our *faith*, that God *freely giveth an interest in Christ and his salvation to us particularly*, is, because it becometh a certain evident truth *when* we believe and trust on him for it, and because it will never be evidently true, except we do in some measure *persuade* and *assure* ourselves that it is so. We have no absolute promise or declaration in scripture, that God certainly will or doth give Christ and his *salvation* to any one of us in *particular*; neither do we know it to be true *already* by scripture, or sense, or reason, *before* we *assure* ourselves absolutely of it: yea, we are without Christ's *salvation* at present, in a state of sin and misery, under the curse and *wrath* of God. Only I shall prove, that we are bound, by the command of God, thus

to *assure* ourselves: and the scripture doth sufficiently warrant us, that we shall not *deceive* ourselves in *believing a lie*; but according to our *faith*, so shall it be to us, *Matth. ix. 29*. This is a strange kind of *assurance*, far different from other ordinary kinds; and therefore no wonder if it be found weak and imperfect, and difficult to be obtained, and assaulted with many *doubtings*. We are constrained to believe other things on the clear evidence we have that they are true, and would remain true, whether we believe them or no; so that we cannot deny our assent, without rebelling against the light of our senses, reason, or conscience. But here our *assurance* is not impressed on our thoughts by any evidence of the thing; but we must work it out in ourselves by the assistance of the Spirit of God, and thereby we bring our own thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ. None but God can justly require of us this kind of *assurance*, because he only calleth those things that are not, as though they were, *Rom. iv. 17*. He only can give existence to things that yet are not, and make a thing to be true, upon our believing it, that was not true before. He only can make good that promise, *What things soe'er ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them*, *Mark xi. 24*. *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?* *Lam. iii. 37*. Therefore this faith is due to God only, and greatly redoundeth to his glory. Men will often require a believing something like it; as when one says, *I will forgive your offence, and be your friend, if I can find that you believe it, and that you take me for a friend*. But their fallible word is not sufficient ground to make us persuade ourselves absolutely, that we shall have their promised favour. The faith of miracles gives us some light in this matter. Christ assured them on whom they were wrought, and who had power given them of working them, that the miracles should be wrought, if they believed without doubting of the event, *Mark xi. 22, 23*. And there is a reason

reason for this resemblance ; because the end of working miracles was, to confirm the doctrine of the gospel of salvation by faith in Christ's name, as the scriptures clearly shew : and indeed the salvation of a sinner is a very great miracle. It is reported, that wizards do often require those that come to them, that they should believe they shall obtain what they desire of them, or at least that they are able to fulfil their desires ; whereby the devil, the master of those wizards, sheweth himself to be God's ape, and that he would fain have that honour and glory ascribed to himself that is due to God alone.

Having thus explained the *nature* of that *assurance* which I have directed unto, I shall now produce several *arguments* to prove, that *there is, and must necessarily be, such an assurance or persuasion of our salvation in saving faith itself.*

First, This *assurance of salvation* is implied in the description before given of that faith whereby we receive Christ, and his salvation, into our hearts. I described faith to be *a grace of the Spirit, whereby we heartily believe the gospel, and also believe on Christ, as he is revealed and freely promised to us therein, for all his salvation.* And I shewed, in the explanation, that believing on Christ is the same with resting, relying, leaning, staying ourselves on Christ, or God through Christ, for our salvation. Believing with a divine faith, grounded on the infallible truth of the free promise, if it did not in some measure exclude a mere suspence and wavering opinion or conjecture, were not worthy to be so called. Believing, being the proper act of faith, must needs have the same contraries to it, as *staggering, Rom. iv. 20. wavering, Heb. x. 23. doubting, Matth. xiv. 31. fear, Mark v. 36.* These contraries do much illustrate the nature of faith ; and do shew, that believing must have some confidence in it, else it would have doubting in the very nature of it. The other terms of *trusting and resting on Jesus Christ, &c.* whereby faith is often described by orthodox teachers, must include *assurance*

rance of salvation, because they signify the same thing with *believing on Christ*. If you continue in mere suspense and doubtfulness of salvation by Christ, your desire to trust, is but a lazy *woulding*, without any fixed *resolution*, and you dare not yet venture to trust on him steadfastly. If you call it only your desire to trust and rely on Jesus Christ, I may answer, that you cannot do this much in a right manner, except you desire and venture to *persuade* and *assure* yourselves of your salvation by Christ, notwithstanding all the causes that you have to doubt and fear the contrary.

Secondly, Several places of scripture declare positively and expressly, that we are to be *assured of our salvation* in that faith whereby we are justified and saved. I shall produce some instances. We are exhorted to *draw near to God with full assurance of faith*, Heb. x. 22. Many apply this text to that which they call the *reflex act of faith*, because they imagine that all *assurance* must needs be by *reflexion*. But the words of the text do clearly teach us, to understand it of that act of faith whereby we draw near to God; that is, the *direct act*: and it is that very faith whereby the *just do live*, even justifying, saving faith, ver. 38. And this *assurance* must be *full*, at least in the true and proper nature of it, in opposition unto mere *doubtfulness* and *uncertainty*, though we are yet further to labour for that which is *full* in the *highest* degree of perfection. And the same faith whereby we are exhorted to *draw nigh unto God*, and whereby the *just liveth*, is, a little after, chap. xi. 1. affirmed to be the *substance of things hoped for*, and the *evidence of things not seen*. Why should saving faith have these high titles and attributes given to it, if it did not contain in it a sure *persuasion* of the great things of our salvation hoped for, which maketh them to be evident to the eyes of our mind, as if they were already present in their substance, though yet not visible to our bodily eyes? That faith whereby we are made partakers of Christ, and to be Christ's house,

must

must be worthy to be called *confidence*, and accompanied with rejoicing hope: *Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end*, Heb. iii. 6, 14. What is confidence concerning any thing, but trusting concerning it, with a firm *persuasion* of the truth of it? If we have only a strong opinion concerning a thing, without any absolute certainty, we use to say, that we are not altogether confident of it. The faith whereby we are justified, must be in a measure like to the faith whereby *Abraham against hope believed in hope*, that his seed should certainly be multiplied according to the promise of God; though, by reason of the deadness of his own body, and of *Sarah's* womb, he could have no evidence from his own qualifications to assure himself of it; but all appearances were rather to the contrary; as the Apostle teacheth clearly, Rom. iv. 18, 19, 23, 24. As absolute as this promise was, thus made to *Abraham*, yet it was not to be fulfilled without this *assurance* of faith; and, by the like faith, the free promises of salvation by Christ, will be absolutely fulfilled to us. The Apostle *James* expressly requireth, that we should ask good things of God in faith, nothing doubting; which includeth *assurance* manifestly: and he tells us plainly, that without it a man ought not to think that he shall receive any think of the Lord. Therefore we may firmly conclude, that without it we shall not receive the salvation of Christ, *Jam. i. 6, 7.* And that which the Apostle *James* requireth us not to doubt of, is the obtaining the things that we ask; as we may learn from an instruction to the same purpose given to us by Christ himself, *What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them*, Mark xi. 24. More places of scripture might be alledged to the same purpose: but these are sufficient to evince, that we are bound to *assure* ourselves of our salvation in faith itself, or else we are never likely to enjoy it; and that it is not humility, but rather proud disobedience, to live in a state of mere suspence

suspence and doubtfulness concerning our salvation ; and that this *assurance* must be in the *direct act* of faith whereby we are justified and saved.

Thirdly, God giveth us sufficient ground in scripture to come to Christ with *confident faith*, at the very first, trusting *assuredly*, that Christ and his salvation shall be given to us without any failing and delay, however vile and sinful our condition hath been hitherto. The scripture speaketh to the vilest sinners in such a manner as if it were framed on purpose to beget *assurance* of salvation in them immediately, *Acts* ii. 39. and iii. 26. The promise is universal, that *whosoever believeth on Christ, shall not be ashamed*, without making a difference between *Jew* and *Greek*, *Rom.* x. 11, 12. And this promise is confirmed by the blood of Christ, who was given for the world, and lifted up upon the cross for this very end, that *whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life*, *John* iii. 14. 15, 16. His invitation is free to any, *If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink* ; and this drink is promised to every one that *believeth*, *John* vii. 37, 39. The command of believing is propounded, not only in general, but in particular ; and the promise of salvation upon believing, is also applied personally, and that to such as have been hitherto in a state of sin and wrath ; as to the wicked, persecuting, self-murdering jailor, *Acts* xvi. 31. *Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thine house*. God commanded them that walked altogether in sin hitherto, to call him their *own father*, in their very first returning, *Jer.* iii. 4. So, *Hos.* ii. 23. God faith, he will say, *Thou art my people ; and they shall say, Thou art my God* ; confidently averring their personal interest in him. God hath joined *confidence* and *salvation* inseparably together : *In returning and rest shall ye be saved ; in quietnes and in confidence shall be your strength*, *II. xxx.* 15. What a poor slender use and improvement do many make of these discoveries of the rich grace of God towards sinners, who say, that, if we see that we have performed

formed the condition of believing, then we may take Christ *confidently* as our own? They skip over the first and principal use they ought to make of them. The very performance of the condition is, to take Christ as our own *immediately*, and to eat him and drink him, by believing *confidently* on him for our salvation. If an honest rich man say to a poor woman, *I promise to be thy husband if thou wilt have me; say but the word, and I am thine*; may not she presently answer *confidently*, *Then thou art my husband, and I claim thee for my husband?* And should she not rather say so, than say, *I believe not what thou sayest?* If an honest man say, *Do but take this gift, and it is your own; do but eat and drink, and you are freely welcome*; may not I take the gift, and eat and drink at first, without any further ado, and with *assurance* that it is mine freely? If I do it doubtfully, I disparage the honesty and credit of the donor, as if he were not a man of his word. In like manner, if, fearing to be *too confident*, lest we should believe a lie, we should come to Christ *doubtfully*, and in *mere suspence*, whether we shall be freely entertained, after all God's free invitations and promises, should we not *disparage* the *faithfulness* of God? and should we not be guilty of making God a liar? as the Apostle John teacheth, because of our not believing the record which God gave of his son: *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son*, 1 John v. 10. 11. And what if the salvation promised, be not absolutely intended for all to whom the gospel cometh? It is enough, that God giveth us his faithful word, that they that believe shall have it, and none else; and hath absolutely intended to fulfil his word, that none shall find it to be a lie to them, and hath joined *believing* and *salvation* together *inseparably*. On this ground God may justly cause the promise of this salvation to be published to all, and may justly require all to believe on him *assuredly* for their own salvation, that so it may appear whether they will give him the *glory* of his *truth*; and, if they will not,

he may justly reject them, and punish them severely for *dis*honouring him by their *un*belief. In this case, we must not look to the secret *decrees* of God, but to his revealed *promises* and *command*.

Fourthly, The professors of true godliness that we read of through the scripture of the Old and New Testament, did commonly profess their *assurance* and *persuasion* of their interest in God and his salvation, and were directed by the word of God so to do; and true saints had still some true *assurance* of it, and we have no cause to judge, that this *assurance* was grounded on the *certainty* of their own *good qualifications*, but rather on the *promises* of God by the *direct* act of faith. We may judge of the ordinary profession of the frame of spirit that was in the saints, by some instances. I shall begin with the profession that the church made when it was very corrupt, at its first coming out of *Egypt*, when few of them could *assure* themselves, by their own *good* qualifications, that they were in a state of grace already; which many now imagine to be the *only* way of *assurance*. Even in that corrupt time, the children of *Israel* sung that triumphant song of *Moses*, *The Lord is my strength, and my song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, &c.* Exod. xv. 2. *Moses* taught them, in this song, to assure themselves of their own personal interest in the salvation; and he guided them to the practice of their duty. And they did not find fault with *Moses*, as some do with Ministers in these days, for putting them to express more confidence in their song, than they could find ground for in their qualifications; but they applied themselves to the exercise of their faith, agreeably to their song: and, doubtless, this faith was unfeigned in some few of them, though but feigned in others; for it is testified of them, that *then they believed his words, they sang his praise*, Psal. cxi. 12. Several other psalms and songs that were by divine appointment in common use under the Old Testament, are as clear an evidence as we can desire, of that assurance of faith which was commonly professed,

fessed, and that people were generally bound to, under the Old Testament: as *Psal.* xxiii. xxvii. xliv, and xlvi. Many other psalms or expressions in psalms might be alledged. The spirits of few, in comparison, could have thoroughly complied with such psalms, though they were true believers, if all the assurance of the love of God must altogether depend upon the certain knowledge of the sincerity of their own hearts. We have a great cloud of witnesses gathered out of the whole history of the Old Testament, *Heb.* xi., who died, and suffered, and obtained great things by faith; whose examples are produced on purpose that we may follow them in believing, to the saving of our souls, *Heb.* x. 39. And, if we consider these examples particularly, we shall find, that many of them do evidently guide us to such a saving faith as hath an assurance of the effect contained in the nature of it. I confess, we read several times of the fears and doublings of the saints under the Old Testament; but we read also how their faith opposed such fears and doubts, and how they themselves condemned them as contrary to faith, as in the Psalms, *Psal.* xlii. 11. xxxi. 22.; and lxxvii. 7. 10. The most mournful psalm in scripture, begins with an expression of some assurance, *Psal.* lxxxviii. 1. And we may note, that the doublings that we meet with of the saints of old, were commonly occasioned by some extraordinary affliction, or some heinous transgression; not by common failings, or the common original depravation of nature, or the uncertainty of their election, or any thought that it is humility to doubt, and that they were not bound to be confident of God's salvation, because then many might be bound to believe a lie. It is hard to find any of these occasions of doubting under the Old Testament, though they are grown so common among us now under the New Testament. In the time of the Apostles, we may well expect that the assurance of faith grew higher, because the salvation of Christ was revealed, and the Spirit of adoption poured forth

plentifully, and the church made free from its former bondage under the terrifying legal covenant. *Paul* could prove to primitive Christians, by appeals to their own experience, that they were the *children and heirs of God*, because they *had not received the Spirit of bondage again unto fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself bearing witness with our spirits, (or beareth our spirits witness, as the Syriack and vulgar Latin renders it, and as the like Greek phrase is rendered, Rom. ix. 1.), that we are the children of God. And if children, then heirs, Rom. viii. 15. 16. 17. Gal. iv. 6.* And the Apostle tells the *Ephesians*, that, after they believed, they were sealed with the *Holy Spirit, which was the earnest of their inheritance*, Eph. i. 13. 14. *i. e.* They were sealed from the the same time that they believed ; for the original words are in the same tense. If this witness, seal, and earnest of the Spirit had not been ordinary to believers, it would not have been sufficient to prove, that they were the children of God : and such manner of arguing might have driven some to despair, that wanted this witness, seal, and earnest.

Let us enquire now, whether the Spirit beareth witness that we are the children of God, and enableth us to cry, *Abba, Father*, by the *direct act*, or by that which they call the *reflect act* of faith ? For we must not think that it is done by an *enthusiasm*, without any ordinary means ; nor can we reasonably imagine, that no true believers can call God father, by the guidance of the Spirit, but only those few that are so sure of their own sincerity, that, by reflecting upon it, they can ground an act of faith concerning their own interest in Christ: no, surely. Therefore we may judge rather, that the Spirit worketh this in us, by giving us saving faith itself, by the *direct act*, of which all true believers are enabled to trust assuredly on Christ for the enjoyment of the adoption of children, and all his salvation, according to the free promise of God, and to call God *father*, without reflecting on any good qualification in themselves :

for

for the Spirit is received by the *direct* act of faith, *Gal.* iii. 2. ; and so he is the Spirit of adoption, and comfort, to all that receive him. They that assert, that the Spirit witnesseth our adoption, only by assuring us of the sincerity of our faith, love, and other gracious qualifications, and by the *reflex* act of faith, do teach also commonly, that you must again try, whether the Spirit thus witnessing, be the Spirit of truth, or of delusion, by searching narrowly, whether our inward grace be sincere or counterfeit: so that hereby the testimony of the Spirit is rendered so hard to be discerned, that it standeth us in no stead; but all our assurance is made at last to depend on our own certain knowledge of our own sincerity. There are several other evidences to shew, that believers generally were persuaded of their salvation in the Apostles times. They loved and waited for the coming of Christ to judge the world, *1 Cor.* i. 7. *2 Tim.* iv. 8. They loved all the saints for the hope that was laid up for them in heaven, *Col.* i. 3. 4. 5. The *Corinthians*, that were very carnal, and but babes in Christ, were persuaded that they should judge the world, and angels, and that their bodies were members of Christ, and the temples of the Holy Ghost, *1 Cor.* vi. 2. 3. 15. 19. The very first coming of the gospel to the *Thessalonians*, was in the Holy Ghost, and much assurance; so that they received it in much affliction, with joy in the Holy Ghost; when as yet they had no considerable time to get assurance, by reflecting on their good qualifications, *1 Thess.* i. 5. 6. Likewise, the believing *Hebrews*, when they were illuminated at their first conversion, took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance: and this was their confidence, which they were not to cast off, because the just liveth by faith. And therefore it appeareth, that this confidence belongeth necessarily to justifying faith, *Heb.* x. 32. 34. 35. 38.

Now, let those that alledge the examples or experiences of many modern Christians to disprove all that

I have asserted, consider well, whether these are fit to be laid in the balance against all the scripture examples and experiences that I have produced out of the Old and New Testament. I confess, that assurance of salvation is more rarely professed by Christians in these times, than formerly: and we may thank some teachers for it, that have deserted the doctrine of former *Protestants* in this point, and vented against it several errors, such as have been already named; and now would take advantage to confirm the truth of their doctrines from those doubtings in Christians, that have been chiefly occasioned by it. But, however, the nature of saving faith is still the same. And I assert, that, in these days as well as formerly, it always hath in it some assurance of salvation by Christ, which doth and will appear, at least in resisting and condemning all doubtings, and praying against them, and endeavouring to trust assuredly, and to call God, *father*; except in extraordinary desertions, by which our case must not be tried. The blind charity of some moveth them to take all for true believers who are full of doubts and troubles concerning their salvation, though it may be they only are convinced of sin, and brought to some zeal of God, that is not according to the knowledge of the way of salvation by Christ: and they think it their duty to comfort such ignorant persons, by persuading them, that their state is good, and their faith right, though they have no assurance of salvation. Thus they are brought to judge falsely concerning the nature of faith, out of their blind charity to such as are yet in ignorance and unbelief; and, instead of comforting such, they rather take the direct way to harden them in their natural state, and to divert them from seeking consolation by saving faith in Christ, and to ruin their souls for ever.

Fifthly, The chief office of this faith, in its direct saving act, is, to receive Christ and his salvation actually into our hearts, as hath been proved; which office cannot be rationally performed, except we do,

in some measure, persuade our hearts and assure ourselves of the enjoyment of him. Thus the soul receiveth comfort from outward things; as a righteous person cannot receive inward comfort from outward things, as from worldly estate, wife, husband, friends, &c. except he chuse them as good, and account them his own by a right and title. This is the only rational way whereby the soul can actively lay hold on Christ, and take actual possession of him, and his salvation, as he is freely offered and promised to us in the gospel, by the grace of faith, which God hath appointed to be our great instrument for the receiving of him, and closing with him. Let any rational man judge, whether the soul doth, or can put forth any sufficient act for the reception and enjoyment of Christ as its saviour, head, or husband, while it is yet in doubt, whether it be the will of Christ to be joined with it in such a near relation? Can a woman honestly receive any one as her husband, without being assured that he is fully willing to be her husband? The same may be said concerning the several parts of Christ's salvation, which are to be received by faith. It is evident, that we do not aright receive the benefit of remission of sins, for the purging of our consciences from that guilt that lieth upon them, unless we have an assured persuasion of God's forgiving them. We do not actually receive into our hearts our reconciliation with God, and adoption of children, and the title to an everlasting inheritance, until we can assure ourselves, that God is graciously pleased to be our God and father, and take us to be his children and heirs. We do not actually receive any sufficient strength to encourage our hearts to holiness in all difficulties, until we can steadfastly believe, that God is with us, and will not fail nor forsake us. Hence then we may firmly conclude, that whoso seeketh to be saved by faith, and doth not seek to have assurance or confidence of his own salvation, doth but deceive himself, and delude his soul with a mere fancy, instead of saving faith,

and doth, in effect, seek to be saved in his corrupt natural state, without receiving and laying actual hold of the Lord Jesus Christ and his salvation;

Sixthly, It is also a great and necessary office of saving faith, to purify the heart, and to enable us to live and walk in the practice of all holy duties, by the grace of Christ, and by Christ himself living in us, as hath been shewed before; which office faith is not able to perform, except some assurance of our own interest in Christ and his salvation be comprehended in the nature of it. If we would live to God, not ourselves, but by Christ living in us, according to St. Paul's example, we must be able to assure ourselves, as he did, *Christ loved me, and gave himself for me*, Gal. ii. 20. If we do not assuredly believe, that we are dead to sin, and alive to God through Christ, and risen with Christ, and not under the law, but under grace, and members of Christ's body, the temple of his Spirit, the dear children of God, it would be hypocrisy to serve God upon the account of such privileges, as if we reckoned ourselves to be partakers of them. He that thinks he should doubt of his salvation, is not a fit disciple for this manner of doctrine. O what a miserable worthless kind of saving faith is this, that cannot fit a believer to practise, in a gospel manner, upon the most pure and powerful principles of grace, but rather leaveth him to work upon legal principles, which can never bring him to serve God acceptably out of love! And as such a faith faileth wholly in the right manner of obeying upon gospel-principles, so it faileth also in the very matter of some great duties, which are of such a nature, that they include assurance of God's love in the right performance of them; such are those great duties of peace with God, rejoicing in the Lord always, hope that maketh not ashamed, owning the Lord as our God and our Saviour, praying to him as our Father in heaven, offering up body and soul as an acceptable sacrifice to him, casting all our cares of body and soul upon him, contentment and hearty

thanksgiving

thanksgiving in every condition, making our boast in the Lord, triumphing in his praise, rejoicing in tribulation, putting on Christ in our baptism, receiving Christ's body as broken for us, and his blood as shed for us in the Lord's supper, committing our souls willingly to God as our redeemer whenever he shall be pleased to call for us, loving Christ's second appearance, and looking for it as that blessed hope. Give me such a saving faith as will produce such fruits as these. No other faith will work by love, and therefore will not avail to salvation in Christ, *Gal. v. 6.* The Apostle *James* putteth thee upon shewing thy faith by thy works, *James ii. 18.* And in this trial, this faith of assurance cometh off with high praise and honour. And, if we be ever called to the fiery trial, as *Protestants* formerly were, we shall find their doctrine of *assurance* will encourage us in suffering for the sake of Christ.

Seventhly, The contrary doctrine, which excludeth assurance out of the nature of saving faith, bringeth forth *many evil fruits*. It tendeth to bereave our souls of all assurance of our salvation, and solid comfort, which is the life of religion, by placing them after sincere universal obedience; whereas, if we have them not first, we can never attain to this obedience, nor to any assurance that dependeth on it, as hath been proved. And this, as far as it prevails, makes us subject to continual doubtings concerning our salvation, and to tormenting fears of wrath, which casteth out true love to God, and can produce no better than slavish hypocritical service. It is one of the principal pillars whereby manifold superstitions in *Popery* are supported, as their Monkish orders, their satisfactions for sin by works of penance, bodily macerations, whippings, pilgrimages, indulgencies, trusting on the merits of saints, &c. When once men have lost the knowledge of the right way to assure themselves of salvation, they will catch at any straw, to avoid drowning in the gulph of despair.

This

This is no way to administer any solid comfort to the wounded spirits of those that see themselves void of all holiness, under the wrath and curse of God, dead in sin, not able so much as to think a good thought. You do but increase their terror and anguish, if you tell them, they must first get faith and obedience, and, when they find they have done that, they may persuade themselves, that God will receive them into his grace and favour. Alas! they know that they cannot believe nor obey, except God prevent them with his grace and favour. And what if they be even at the point of death, struggling with death's pangs, so that they have no time or leisure to get good qualifications, and examine the goodness of them? You must have a more speedy way to comfort such, by discovering to them the free promises of salvation to the worst of sinners by faith in Christ, and by exhorting them to apply those promises, and trust on Christ confidently for remission of sins, holiness and glory; assuring them also, that God will help them to believe sincerely on Christ, if they desire it with all their hearts; and that it is their duty to believe, because God commands it.

Several other evils are occasioned by the same doctrine: Men are unwilling to know the worst of themselves, and prone to think their qualifications better than they are, that they may avoid despair. Others please and content themselves without any assurance of their interest in Christ, because they think, that is not necessary to salvation, and that but few attain to it; and in this they shew little love to Christ, or to their own souls. Some foster doubts of salvation as signs of humility, though they will hypocritically complain of them. Many mispend their time in poring upon their own hearts, to find out some evidence of their interest in Christ, when they should rather be employed in receiving Christ, and walking in him, by a confident faith.

Thus

Thus many believers walk heavily in the bitterness of their souls, conflicting with fears and doubts all their days. And this is the cause that they have so little courage and fervency of spirit in the ways of God, and that they so much mind earthly things, and are so afraid of sufferings and death; and, if they get some assurance by the reflex act of faith, they often soon lose it again by sins and temptations. The way to avoid these evils, is, to get your *assurance*, and to maintain it, and renew it upon all occasions by the *direct* act of faith, by *trusting* assuredly on the name of the Lord, and staying yourself upon your God, when you walk in darkness, and see no light in any of your own qualifications, Isa. 1. 10. I doubt not but the experience of many choice Christians will bear witness to this truth.

DIRECTION XI.

Endeavour diligently to perform the great work of believing on Christ, in a right manner, without any delay, and then also to continue and increase in your most holy faith; that so your enjoyment of Christ, union and fellowship with him, and all holiness by him, may be begun, continued, and increased in you.*

EXPLICATION.

I Think it may be clearly perceived by the foregoing directions, that *faith in Christ* is the duty with which a holy life is to begin, and by which the foundation of all other holy duties is laid in the soul.

The

* This author, by calling believing the great work, distinguishes what he means by believing, viz. an act of trust and dependance in a way of duty from all mere passive impressions and convictions of truth upon the mind, which may be where this believing, trust, or dependance is neglected, and comes not so much under the notion of duty,

The FIRST thing in the present direction, is, to *put you upon the performance* of this great work of believing on Christ, and to *guide you* therein. For which end you are to consider distinctly, four things contained in it. 1. The first is, You are to *make it your diligent endeavour* to perform the great work of believing on Christ. Many make little conscience of this duty. It is not known by natural light, as many moral duties are, but only by supernatural revelation in the gospel, and it is *foolishness* to the natural man. These are sometimes terrified with apprehensions of other sins, and will examine themselves concerning them; and, it may be, will write them down, to help their memories and devotion. But the *great sin of not believing* on Christ, is seldom thought of in their self-examination, or registered in the large catalogues of their sins. And even those who are convinced, that believing on Christ is a duty necessary to salvation, do neglect all diligent endeavours to perform it: either because they account, that it is a motion of the heart which may be easily performed at any time, without any labour or diligent endeavour; or, on the contrary, because they account it as difficult as all the works of the law, and utterly impossible for them to perform by their most diligent endeavours, except the Spirit of God work it in them by his mighty power; and that therefore it is in vain for them to work until they feel this working of the Spirit in their hearts: or because they account it a duty so peculiar to the elect, that it would be presumption for them to endeavour the performance of it,

nor answers to the command " believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," and may rather be called conviction than faith. But let it be remembered, that tho' this believing treated of is in its nature an act, work, or duty of the soul, yet it justifies and sanctifies only as an instrument, and under this consideration stands properly opposed to all other works whatsoever.

it, until they know themselves to be elected to eternal life through Christ. I shall urge you to a diligent performance of this duty, notwithstanding all these impediments, by the following consideration. It is worthy of our best endeavours, as appeareth by the *preciousness, excellency and necessity* of it already discovered.

1. If the light of nature were not darkened in the matters of salvation, it would shew us, that we cannot of ourselves find out the way of salvation, and would condemn those that despise that revelation of the way of salvation that God hath given us in the gospel, declared in the holy scriptures. The great end of preaching the gospel, is for *the obedience of faith*, Rom. i. 5. that so we may be brought to Christ, and all other obedience. Yea, the great end of all revealed doctrines in the whole scripture, is, to *make us wise unto salvation by faith which is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. The end of the law given by Moses, was for *righteousness to every one that believeth*, Rom. x. 4. and Christ was that end for righteousness. The moral law itself was revealed, in order to our salvation by believing on Christ; or else the knowledge of it had nothing availed fallen man, that was unable to perform it. Therefore they that slight the duty of believing, and account it foolishness, do thereby slight, despise and vilify the *whole counsel of God* revealed in the scripture.

2. Believing on Christ, is a work that will require diligent endeavour and labour for the performance of it. We must *labour to enter into that rest, lest any man fall by unbelief*, Heb. iv. 11. I confess, it is easy, pleasant and delicious in its own nature, because it is a motion of the heart, without any cumbersome bodily labour; and it is a taking Christ and his salvation as *our own*, which is very comfortable and delightful; and the soul is carried forth in this by love to Christ and its own happiness, which is an affection that maketh even hard works easy and pleasant: yet it is made difficult to us, by reason of the opposition that

that it meets with from our own inward corruptions, and from satan's temptations. The very easiness of some duties makes their performance difficult; as *Naaman the Syrian* was hardly brought to *wash and be clean*, because he thought it to be too slight and easy a remedy for the cure of his leprosy, *2 Kings v. 12, 13.* Even in this very case, people are offended at the duty of *believing on Christ*, as too slight and easy a remedy to cure the leprosy of the soul; they would have some harder thing enjoined them, to the attainment of so great an end as this everlasting salvation.

3. Though we cannot possibly perform this great work in a *right* manner, until the Spirit of God *work* faith in our hearts by his mighty power; yet it is necessary that we should endeavour it; and that before we can find the Spirit of God *working* faith effectually in us, or giving strength to believe. The way whereby the Spirit works faith in the elect, is, by stirring them up to endeavour to believe. And this is a way suitable to the means that the Spirit useth, *i. e.* the exhortations, commands and invitations of the gospel; which would be of *no force*, if we were not to obey them, until we find faith *already* wrought in us. Neither can we possibly find, that the Spirit of God doth effectually *work* faith, or give strength to believe, *until we act* it; for which end, all inward graces, as well as all other inward habits, are discerned by their acts, as seed in the ground by its springing. We cannot see any such thing as *love* to God or man in our hearts *before* we *act* it. Children know not their ability to stand upon their feet, until they have made trial, by endeavouring so to do: so we know not our spiritual *strength*, *until* we have learned by experience from the use and exercise of it. Though the Spirit worketh other duties in us by faith; yet he worketh faith in us immediately by hearing, knowing, and understanding the word: *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*, *Rom. x. 17.* And in the word he maketh *no absolute*

absolute promise or declaration, that he will work faith in *this* or *that* unbelieving heart, or that he will give strength to believe to *any one in particular*, or begin the work of believing in Christ; for faith itself is the first grace whereby we have a particular interest in any saving promise. Therefore, *as soon* as we know the duty of believing, we are to apply ourselves *immediately* to the vigorous performance of the duty; and, in so doing, we shall find, that the Spirit of Christ hath strengthened us to believe, though we know not *certainly*, that he will do it before-hand. The Spirit cometh indiscernibly upon the elect, to work faith within them; like the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and none knoweth whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, but only we hear the sound of it, and thereby know it when it is past and gone, *John* iii. 8. We must therefore *begin* the work, *before* we know, that the Spirit doth or will work in us savingly. It is enough that God discovereth to us beforehand in the gospel what *faith* is, and the *ground* we have to believe on Christ for our own salvation; and that God requireth this duty of us, and will help us in the performance of it, if we apply ourselves heartily thereunto: *Fear not, I command thee to be strong, and of good courage, Josh. i. 9. Arise and be doing, and the Lord will be with thee, 1 Chron. xxii. 16.* Therefore whoso receiveth this gospel-discovery as the word of God in hearty love, is taught by the Spirit, and will certainly come to Christ by ~~believing~~, *John* vi. 45. Every one that receiveth it *not*, despiseth God, maketh him a liar, and deserveth justly to perish for his *unbelief*.

4. All that hear the gospel, are *obliged* to the duty of believing, as well as to all the duties of the moral law, and that *before* they know their own particular election: and they are liable to condemnation for *unbelief*, as well as for any other sin: *He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God, John* iii. 18. We cannot have a certain knowledge of our election

to eternal life *before* we do believe ; it is a thing hidden in the unsearchable counsel of God, until it be manifest by our effectual calling, and believing on Christ. Therefore we must believe on Christ before we know our election, or else we shall never know it, and shall never believe. And it is *no presumption* for us to trust *confidently* on Christ for everlasting life, *before* we have any good evidence of our election ; because God, that cannot lie, hath made a general promise, *That whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed*, without making the least difference among them that perform this duty, *Rom. x. 11, 12.* The promise is as firm, and sure to be fulfilled, as any of God's decrees and purposes ; and therefore it is a good and sufficient *ground* for our confidence. And we need not fear that we shall *infringe* God's decree of election, by believing on Christ confidently for our salvation, before we know what God hath decreed concerning us ; for, if we believe, we shall at last be found among the number of the elect ; and, if we refuse to believe, we shall thereby wilfully fort *ourselves* among the reprobates, *that stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they are appointed*, *1 Pet. ii. 8.* Thus it appeareth, that it is not *presumption*, but *your bounden duty*, to apply yourselves to the great work of *believing* on Christ for salvation, without *questioning* at all before-hand, whether you are elected or no : *Secret things belong to God, but these things that are revealed, belong unto us, that we may do them*, *Deut. xxix. 29.*

The **SECOND** thing directed to, is, that you should endeavour for *a right manner* of performing this duty. Now I confess, that God only is able to guide us effectually in the *right* way of believing. But, however, we are to know, that God guideth us *only* according to the *rule* of his word : and we must endeavour to learn the *right* way of believing out of the word, or else we are not able so much as to trust rightly on God for guidance and direction in this great work. To help you herein, I have given you before,

before, in this treatise, a *description of saving faith*; and have shewed, that it containeth *two acts* in it; the one is, *believing the truth of the gospel*; the other is, *believing on Christ, as revealed and freely promised to us in the gospel, for all his salvation*. Now, your great endeavour must be, to perform *both* these *acts* in a *right manner*; as I shall shew concerning each of them in particular.

In the *first* place, you are highly concerned to endeavour for a *right belief of the truth of the gospel of Christ*; that so you may be well furnished, disposed and encouraged to believe on Christ, as revealed and promised in the gospel. Hereby you are to remove all uncomfortable thoughts and objections of Satan and your own conscience, and to overcome all corrupt inclinations that hinder a cheerful embracing of Christ and his salvation. It is found by experience, that, when any fail in the *second act of faith*, the reason of the failing is commonly some defect in this *first act*. There is some false imagination or other in them, contrary to the belief of the truth of the gospel; which is a strong hold of sin and Satan, that must be pulled down, before they can receive Christ into their hearts by believing on him. If they knew the name of Christ as he is discovered in the gospel, and judged aright of the truth and excellency of it, they would not fail to put their trust in him. And we are in great danger of entertaining such false imaginations, and to account many truths of the gospel strange paradoxes, yea foolish and pernicious, because of our ignorance, self-conceitedness, guilty consciences, corrupt affections, and manifold errors wherewith our judgments are prepossessed in matters of salvation; and because Satan laboureth to beguile us, as he did *Eve, through his subtlety, to corrupt our minds from the simplicity of the gospel that is in Christ*, 2 Cor. xi. 3. I shall therefore give you some *particular instructions*, that are of greatest moment, to prevent such defects as we are *most liable to in the first act of our faith*.

1. You must believe with *a full persuasion*, that you are a child of wrath by nature, as well as others; fallen from God by the sin of the first *Adam*; *dead in trespasses and sins*; subject to the curse of the law of God, and to the power of Satan, and to insupportable misery to all eternity; and that you cannot possibly procure your reconciliation with God, or any spiritual life and strength to do any good work, by any endeavouring to get salvation according to the terms of the legal covenant; and that you cannot find any way to escape out of this sinful and miserable condition by your own reason and understanding, without supernatural revelation, nor be freed from it, except by that infinite power that raiseth the dead. It was for want of this humiliation that the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* were not so forward to enter into the kingdom of heaven as the publicans and harlots, *Matth. xxi. 31.*

2. You are to believe *assuredly*, that there is no way to be saved, without receiving *all the saving benefits of Christ*, his *Spirit* as well as his *merits*, *sanctification* as well as *remission of sins*, by faith.

3. You are to be fully persuaded of the *all sufficiency of Christ for the salvation of yourself, and of all that believe on him*; that *his blood clearseth from all sin*, *1 John i. 7.* Many that have fallen into great sins, are ruined for ever, because they do not account the grace of Christ sufficient for their pardon and sanctification: when they think they are gone, and past all hope of recovery, that *their sins are upon them, and they pine away in them, how shall they live?* *Ezek. xxxiii. 10.* This despair works secretly in many souls, without much trouble and horror, and maketh them careless of their souls, and true religion. The devil fills some with horrid, filthy, blasphemous thoughts, on purpose that they may think their sins too great to be forgiven. There are others that despair of ever getting any victory over their lusts, because they have formerly made many vows and resolutions, and have used many vigorous endeavours against

against them in vain. Such are to persuade themselves, that the grace of Christ is sufficient for them, when all other means have failed; as the woman that had the issue of blood, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse by any remedies that physicians could prescribe, yet persuaded herself, that, if she might but *touch the cloaths of Christ, she should be whole*, Mark v. 25.—28. Abundance of people that give up themselves to all licentiousness in this wicked generation, lie under secret despair; which maketh them so desperate in swearing, blaspheming, whoring, drunkenness, and all manner of wickedness. How horrid and heinous soever our sins and corruptions have been, we should learn to account them a small matter in comparison to the grace of Christ, who is God as well as man, and offered himself, by the eternal Spirit, as a sacrifice of an infinite value, for our salvation; and can create us anew as easily as he created the world, by a word speaking.

4. You are to be fully persuaded of the truth of *the general free promise in your own particular case*, that, if you *believe* on Christ sincerely, you shall have everlasting *life*, as well as any other in the world, without performing any *condition* of works to *procure an interest in Christ*: for the promise is universal, *Whosoever believeth on him, shall not be ashamed*, Rom. ix. 33. without any exception. And, if God exclude you not, you must not exclude yourselves; but rather conclude peremptorily, that, how vile, wicked and unworthy soever you be, yet, if you come, you shall be accepted as well as any other in the world. If they that are dead in sin, cannot be saved, then all must despair and perish; for none have any spiritual life, until they receive it by believing on Christ. And here you must be sure to believe steadfastly, that Christ and all his salvation is bestowed as a free gift upon those that do not work to procure any right or title to him, or meetness or worthiness to receive him, but only *believe on him that justifieth the ungodly*, Rom. iv. 5. If you put any condition

of works or good qualifications between yourselves and Christ, it will be a partition-wall which you can never climb over.

5. You are to believe assuredly, that *it is the will of God you should believe in Christ*, and have eternal life by him, as well as any other; and that your believing is a duty *very acceptable to God*; and that he will help you, as well as any other, in this work, because he calleth and commandeth you, by the gospel, to believe in Christ. This maketh us to set clearly upon the work of believing; as when Jesus commanded the blind man to be called, they said unto him, *Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee*, Mark x. 49. A command of Christ made Peter to walk upon the water, Matth. iv. 29. And here we are not to meddle with God's *secret of predestination*, or the *purpose of his will*, to give the grace of faith to *some* rather than *others*; but only with his *revealed will*, in his gracious invitations and commands, by which we are required to *believe on Christ*. You are to reject and abandon all thoughts that are contrary to this persuasion. What if few be saved? thy salvation will not make the number too great; for few will follow thee in the duty of believing. And we are to account, that the reason why God doth so terribly denounce his judgments against us by his word, is, that we may escape them, by flying for refuge to his free mercy in Christ. Take heed of fostering any thoughts, that God hath absolutely decreed to shew no saving mercy to *you*, or that you have already committed the unpardonable sin; or that it is in vain for you to attempt the work of believing, because God will not help you in it. If such thoughts prevail in your hearts, they will do you more hurt than the most blasphemous thoughts that terrify you, or any of the grossest abominations that ever you were guilty of; because they obstruct your believing on Christ for salvation. *The Spirit and the bride say, Come, Christ faith, Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*, Rev. xxii. 17. Therefore we are to abandon

abandon all thoughts that hinder our coming to Christ, as very sinful and pernicious, arising in us from our own corruptions, and Satan's delusions, and utterly opposite to the mind of Christ, and teaching of the Spirit.

6. Add to all these, *a full persuasion of the incomparable glorious excellency of Christ, and of the way of salvation by him*, You are to esteem the enjoyment of Christ as the only salvation and true happiness, and such an happiness as hath in it unsearchable riches of glory, and will make our cup to run over with exceeding abundance of peace, and joy, and glory, to all eternity. The devil, who is the god of this world, knows how necessary it is for our salvation, to discern all the glory and excellency of Christ; and therefore, where the gospel is preached, he maketh it his great work, to eclipse the glory of Christ in the ministry, and to blind the minds of the people, *lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them*, 2 Cor. iv. 4. One that is convinced of the truth of the gospel, may be averse to the embracing of it, until he see also the goodness of it, that *Christ is altogether lovely and excellent*.

I come now to the second principal act of faith, whereby *Christ himself, and his Spirit, and all his saving benefits, are actually received into the heart*; which is, *believing on Christ, as revealed and freely promised to us in the gospel, for all his salvation*. The Spirit of God doth habitually dispose and incline our hearts to a right performance of this act, by enabling us to perform the first act, according to the former instructions, by believing assuredly those great things of the gospel whereby we are delivered into *a form of doctrine*, Rom. vi. 17; which we are to obey from our hearts, and to follow as our pattern, in the manner of our acting faith in Christ for salvation. Therefore I need only exhort you briefly to act your faith in Christ, according to that form and pattern, in which we have been already so largely instructed. You are to believe in Christ as *alone-sufficient, and all-sufficient*

*Sufficient for your happiness and salvation ; despairing altogether of any attainment of happiness by your own wisdom, strength, works of righteousness, or any fleshly worldly confidences whatever. We must be as dead people to all other confidences, and account them to be *loss for Christ*, according to the example of the blessed Apostle, Phil. iii. 6. 7. 8.*

We must not be grieved, that we have nothing to trust upon besides Christ, for our salvation ; but rather, we are to rejoice, that we need nothing else, and that we have a sure foundation to rely upon, incomparably better than any other that can be imagined. And we must resolve to cast the burden of our souls wholly on Christ, and to seek salvation no other way, whatsoever becomes of us. If the cripple lay not the whole weight of his body upon a strong staff, but part of it on a rotten one, he is like to receive a fall. If the swimmer will not commit his body wholly to the water to bear him up, but catch at weeds, or struggle to feel out ground, he may sink to the bottom. Christ will be *all* our salvation, or nothing. If we seek to be saved any other way, as the *Galatians* did by *circumcision*, *Christ will profit us nothing*, Gal. v. 3.

You are also to receive Christ merely as a free gift, given to the chief of sinners, resolving, that you will not perform any conditions to procure yourselves a right and title to him ; but that you will come to him as a lost sinner, an ungodly creature, trusting on him that *justifieth the ungodly* ; and that you will *buy him without money, and without any price whatsoever*, Rom. iv. 5. Isa. lv. 2. Look not on your own faith or love, or any good qualifications in yourselves, as the ground of your trusting in Christ, but only to the free grace and loving kindness of God in Christ : *How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God ! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings*, Psal. xxxvi. 7. For, if you make your faith, love, or good qualifications, to be your first and principal foundation: and you build Christ upon them,

them, instead of building all upon Christ, you invert the order of the gospel, and *Christ will profit you nothing.*

Another thing to be observed diligently, is, that you must come to Christ for a new holy heart and life, and all things necessary thereunto, as well as for deliverance from the wrath of God, and the torments of hell. You must also come to him with an ardent love and affection to him, and esteem him better than a thousand worlds, and the only excellent portion, loathing and abhoring yourself, as a vile, sinful and miserable creature, and accounting all things dung in comparison of his excellency; that you may be able to say from the bottom of your heart, *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee*, Psal. lxxiii. 25.

Lastly, You must endeavour to draw near with *full assurance of faith*, Heb. x. 22; trusting on Christ confidently for your *own particular salvation*, upon the account of that general promise, That *whoever believeth on Christ, shall not be ashamed*, Rom. ix. 33. You must check yourselves for all doubtings, fears, staggerings, concerning your own salvation by Christ, saying, with the Psalmist, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? &c.* Psal. xlvi. 11.

The **THIRD** thing contained in this direction, is the *avoiding all delay* in the performance of this great work of *believing in Christ*. Until we have performed it, we continue under the power of sin and Satan, and under the wrath of God; and there is nothing between hell and us, besides the breath of our nostrils. When Satan cannot prevail with people, to reject wholly the duty of believing, his next attempt for the ruin of their souls, is, to prevail with them, at least to delay and shift off the performance of it from time to time, by several false reasonings and imaginations which he putteth into their minds. The most ignorant and sensual are easily prevailed with, to defer this duty, until they have taken their fill of the pleasures, profits, and honours of

this world, and are summoned to prepare for another world, by infirmities, age, sickness; praying and hoping, that a large time of repentance will be granted unto them before they die. But such delays shew, that they are really unwilling to repent and believe, until they are forced by necessity; and that they prefer the pleasures, profits, and honours of the world, above God and Christ, and their own souls. Thus they unfit themselves more and more for this great duty, by their customary walking in sin, and by mispending the precious time of health and strength, which is most meet for the performance of this great work. They highly provoke God never to give them time or grace to repent hereafter. Another sort of people there are, that delay the great work of believing, to the ruin of their souls, resting in an attendance upon the *outward means* of grace and salvation, instead of any endeavours to receive Christ by faith, though they be convinced of the truth of the gospel. This they call waiting upon God at the doors of his grace and salvation, in the use of means appointed by him, and sitting under the droppings of the sanctuary. But let them know, that this is not the right waiting on God required in scripture. • It is rather disobedience to God, and to the means of his appointment, who requires, that we should be *doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves*, Jam. i. 22; and that we should come in to the *spiritual feast*, Luke xiv. 23; and not only stand at the door, or sit under the droppings of the house of God, lest Christ repute us no better than eve-droppers. That holy waiting on the Lord commended to us in scripture, is ever accompanied with believing and hoping in the Lord, and dependeth thereon: *I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait I say, on the Lord*, Psal. xxvii. 13. 14. *It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord*, Lam. iii. 26. What is it that these deluded

deluded ones wait for, before they perform the duty of believing? Is it for more knowledge of the gospel? The way to increase thy knowledge, as well as any other talent, is, to make use of what thou hast received already. Believe heartily on Christ for all thy salvation, according to that little knowledge of the gospel which thou hast, and thou wilt have an interest in the promise of knowledge contained in the new covenant: *They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord*, Jer. xxxi. 34. Is it for the appointed time of thy conversion, that thou waitest? Then thou waitest, as those impotent folk that lay at the pool of *Bethesda*, waiting for the season when the angel would come down and move the water. Know then, that, if thou enter into Christ now by faith, thou shalt find in him *waters of life*, and the *Spirit moving them for the healing and quickening of thy soul*. God hath appointed by his word, that it shall be thy duty to endeavour, that the present time should be the time of thy conversion: *As the Holy Ghost saith, To day if thou wilt hear his voice, harden not thy heart*, Heb. iii. 7. 8. And thou shalt never know at what time God hath purposed in his secret counsel, to give faith to thee, until thou doth actually believe. Dost thou wait for any manifestations or flowings in of God's saving love to thy soul? Then the way to obtain it, is, to believe, that the *God of hope may fill thee with all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. Thou hast sufficient manifestation of God's love to thy soul, by the free promises of life and salvation by Christ. Do but *trust on the name of the Lord, and stay upon thy God*, when thou *walketh in darkness, and seest no light of sensible comforts any other way*; otherwise thou waitest for comfort in vain, and *this thou shalt have at the Lord's hand, thou shalt lie down in sorrow*, Isa. I. 10. 11. Dost thou wait for any qualifications to prepare thee for the work of believing? If they be good and holy qualifications, thou canst not have them *before* faith; but they are either included in the

nature of faith, or they are *fruits* of it; as hath been largely proved. If they be bad and sinful, it is strange that any should wait for them, and yet no more strange than true. Some foolishly wait to be terrified with a sense of God's wrath, and despairing thoughts; and these they call the pangs of the new birth; tho', in their own nature, they are rather the pangs of the spiritual death, and bring forth hatred to God, rather than holiness: and therefore we should strive to prevent them, by believing God's love in Christ, rather than to wait for them. It is true, God maketh these despairing thoughts, as well as other sins, work for good to them that are delivered from them by faith in Christ. But we must not desire or wait for any evil of sin, such as these despairing thoughts are, that good may come of it: neither should we expect to be worse before we be better, when we may and ought to be better *presently* by believing on Christ.

The **FOURTH** thing in the direction, is, that *we should continue and increase in this most holy faith*. As long as we continue in this life, we must endeavour *to continue in the faith grounded and settled, not moved away from the hope of the gospel*, Col. i. 23; and *to hold the beginning of our confidence, and the rejoicing of hope, steadfast to the end*, Heb. iii. 6. 14; and *build up ourselves in our most holy faith*, Jude vers. 20; *abounding therein with thanksgiving*, Col. ii. 7. And we are not only to receive Christ and a new holy nature by faith, but also to live and walk by it, and to *resist the devil*, and to *quench all his fiery darts by it*, and also *to grow in grace, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God*; for *we are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation*, 1 Pet. i. 5. As all our Christian warfare is the *good fight of faith*, 1 Tim. vi. 12. All spiritual life and holiness continue, grow, or decay in us, according as faith continueth, groweth, or decayeth in vigour: but, when this faith beginneth to sink by fears and doubtings, the man himself beginneth to sink together with it, Matth. xiv. 29. 33. 31.

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You must therefore endeavour to continue and go on in the same right manner as I have taught you to begin this great work of believing in Christ, that your faith may be of the same nature from the beginning to the end, though it increase in degrees. If you find your faith hath produced good works, you should thereby increase your confidence in Christ for salvation by his mere grace. But take heed of changing the nature of your faith, from trusting on the grace and merits of Christ, to trusting on your own works, according to the *Popish* doctrine, *That our first justification is by grace and faith only, but our second justification is also by works.* Beware also of trusting on faith itself, as a work of righteousness, instead of trusting on Christ by faith. If you do not find, that your believing in such a right manner as I have described, doth produce such fruits of holiness as you desire, you ought not to diminish, but rather to increase your confidence in Christ: knowing that the weakness of your faith hindereth its fruitfulness, and the greater your confidence is concerning the love of God to you in Christ, the greater will be your love to God, and to his service. If you fall into any gross sin after the work is begun in you, as *David* and *Peter* did, think not, that you must *cast away* your *confidence*, and expect nothing but *wrath* from God and Christ, and that you must *refuse* to be *comforted* by the *grace* of Christ, at least for *some time*; for thus you would be the *more weak*, and *prone* to fall into *other sins*: but rather strive to believe *more confidently*, that you *have an advocate with the Father*, *Jesus Christ the righteous*; and that *he is the propitiation for our sins*, *1 John ii. 1. 2.* And let not the *guilt of sin* stay at all upon your *conscience*, but *wash it away*, with all speed, in the *fountain* of *Christ's blood*, which is opened for us, that it may be ready for our use on all such incident occasions; that so you may be humbled for your sins in a gospel-way, and may hate your own *sinfulness*, and be sorry for it with godly sorrow, *out of love to God*. *Peter* might have been ruined

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for ever by denying Christ, as *Judas* was by betraying him, if *Peter's* faith had not been upheld by the prayer of Christ, *Luke xxii. 31, 32*. If a cloud be cast over all your inward qualifications, so that you can see no grace at all in yourselves; yet still trust on him that *justifieth the ungodly*, and *came to seek and to save them that are lost*. If God seem to deal with you as an enemy, by bringing on you some horrible affliction, as he did upon *Job*, beware of condemning your faith, and its fruits, as if they were not acceptable to God; but rather say, with holy *Job*, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own ways before him*, *Job xiii. 15*. Strive to keep and to increase faith by faith, i. e. by acting faith frequently, by trusting on God to keep and increase it; being confident, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ, *Phil. i. 6*.

DIRECTION XII.

Make diligent use of your most holy faith, for the immediate performance of the duties of the law, by walking no longer according to your old natural state, or any principles or means of practice that belong unto it, but only according to that new state which you receive by faith, and the principles and means of practice that properly belong thereunto; and strive to continue and increase in such manner of practice. This is the only way to attain to an acceptable performance of those holy and righteous duties, as far as it is possible in this present life.

EXPLICATION.

THIS deserveth to be diligently considered as the principal direction, to which all the foregoing and following are subservient. As for the meaning of it, I have already shewed, that our old natural state is that which we derive from the first *Adam* by natural generation: and it is called, in the scripture,

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the old man ; and, while we be in it, we are said to be in the flesh. And our new state is that which we receive from the second Adam, Jesus Christ, by being new-born in union and fellowship with him through faith ; and it is called, in scripture, the new man ; and, when we are in it, we are said to be in the Spirit. The principles and means of practice belonging to a natural state, are such as persons do or may attain and make use of, before they are in Christ by faith. Such as belong properly to the new state, are the manifold holy endowments, which we partake of in Christ by faith, such as have already appeared to be the only effectual means of a holy life. We are said to walk according to either of these states, or to the principles or means that belong to either of them, when we are moved and guided, by virtue of them, to such actings as are agreeable to them. Thus Kings act according to their state, in commanding authoritatively, and in magnificent bounty ; poor men, in the way of service and obedience ; and children, indiscreetly, *Esther* i. 7. *Prov.* xviii. 23. *1 Cor.* xiii. 11. So the manner of practice here directed to, consists in moving and guiding ourselves, in the performance of the works of the law, by gospel principles and means. This is the rare and excellent art of godliness, in which every Christian should strive to be skilful and expert. The reason why many come off with shame and confusion, after they have a long time laboured with much zeal and industry for the attainment of true godliness, is, because they were never acquainted with this holy art, and never endeavoured to practise it in a right gospel-way. Some worldly arts are called mysteries ; but, above all, this spiritual art of godliness is, without controversy, a great mystery, *1 Tim.* iii. 16. because the means that are to be made use of in it, are deeply mysterious, as hath been shewed ; and you are not a skilful artist, till you know them, and can reduce them to practice. It is a manner of practice far above the sphere of natural ability, such as would never have entered into

to the hearts of the wisest in the world, if it had not been revealed to us in the scriptures; and, when it is there most plainly revealed, continueth a dark riddle to those that are not inwardly enlightened and taught by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, that you may the better be acquainted with a mystery of so high concernment, I shall shew, in the first place, that *the holy scriptures do direct you to this manner of practice, as only effectual for the performance of holy duties; and then I shall lay before you some necessary instructions*, that you may understand how to walk aright in it, and continue and go forward therein, till you be made perfect in Christ.

For the FIRST of these, the holy scriptures are very large and clear, in directing us to *this manner of practice, and to continuance and growth therein*. And here it is useful for us, to observe the great variety of peculiar words and phrases whereby the Holy Ghost teacheth this mystery, which many that frequently read the scriptures, yea that pretend to be preachers of the gospel, do little understand or regard; shewing thereby, that the things of the Spirit of God are foolishness to them, and that they are not yet acquainted with the form of sound words, and are strangers to the very language of the gospel, which they profess, and pretend to preach. I shall therefore present to your view several of those peculiar words and phrases whereby this mysterious manner of practice is expressed in the holy scriptures, and commended to you as the only way for the sure attainment of all holiness in heart and life. I shall rank such of them together as agree in sense, that the multitude of them may not breed confusion in your thoughts.

1. This is the manner of practice in scripture, which is expressed by *living by faith*, Heb. ii. 4. Gal. ii. 20. Heb. x. 38. *walking by faith*, 2 Cor. v. 7. *faith working by love*, Gal. v. 6. *overcoming the world by faith*, 1 John v. 4. *quenching all the fiery darts of the wicked, by the shield of faith*, Eph. vi. 16. Some make

make no more of *living and walking by faith*, than merely a stirring up and encouraging ourselves to our duty by such principles as we believe. Thus the Jews might account that they *lived by faith*, because they professed and assented unto the doctrine of Moses and the Prophets, and were moved thereby to *a zeal of God*, though they *sought righteousness not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law*, Rom. ix. 32. Thus Paul might think he *lived by faith*, while he was a zealous *Pharisee*; but afterwards he knew, that the *life of faith* consisted in *dying to the law, and living to God*; and that *not himself, but Christ lived in him*, Gal. ii. 19, 20. And it is one and the same thing, to be *justified by faith, and by Christ believed on*, Rom. v. 1. so to *live, walk and work by faith*, is all one with *living, walking, working by means of Christ*, and his saving endowments; which we receive and make use of by faith, to guide and move ourselves to the practice of holiness.

2. The same thing is commended to us by the terms of *walking, rooted and built up in Christ*, Col. ii. 6, 7. *living to God, and not to ourselves, but to have Christ living in us*, Gal. ii. 19, 20. *good conversation in Christ*, 1 Pet. iii. 16. *putting on the Lord Jesus Christ*, that we may *walk honestly as in the day*, Rom. xiii. 13, 14. *being strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Eph. vi. 10. *doing all things in the name of Christ*, Col. iii. 17. *walking up and down in the name of the Lord*, Zech. x. 12. *going in the strength of the Lord*; *making mention of his righteousness, even of his only*, Psal. lxxi. 16. These phrases are frequent, and do sufficiently explain one another; and do shew, that we are to practise holiness, not only by virtue of Christ's authority, but also of his strengthening endowments moving and encouraging us thereunto.

3. It is also signified by the phrases of *being strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. ii. 1. *having our conversation in the world, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God*, 2 Cor. i. 12. *having or holding fast grace, that we may serve God acceptably, labouring abundantly*

dantly, in such a manner, as that the whole work is not performed by us, but *by the grace of God that is with us*, 1 Cor. xv. 10. By grace, therefore, we may well understand the privileges of our *new state* given to us in Christ, whereby we ought to be influenced and guided in the performance of holy duties.

4. It is also signified, when we are to *put off the old*, and *put on the new man*; yea to continue in so doing, though we have done it in a measure already, and that we avoid our *former sinful conversation*, Eph. iv. 21. 22. 24. and to avoid sin, because we have *put off the old*, and *put on the new man*, Col. iii. 9. 10. I have already shewed, that by this *twofold man* is not meant merely *sin* and *holiness*; but by the former is meant our *natural state*, with all its endowments, whereby we are furnished only to the practice of sin; and by the latter, our *new state* in Christ, that whereby we are furnished with all means necessary for the practice of holiness.

5. We are to understand the same thing, when we are taught *not to walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, that we may be free from the *law of sin*, and that the *righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us*, Rom. viii. 1. 2. 3. and, *through the Spirit, to mortify the deeds of the body*; and to be *led by the Spirit*, because we *live by the Spirit*, and have *crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts*, Gal. v. 24. The Apostle doth shew by these expressions, not only that *we are to practise holiness*, but also by *what means we may do it effectually*. By the *flesh* is meant, our *old nature* derived from the first *Adam*; and by the *Spirit* is meant, the *Spirit of Christ*, and that *new nature* which we have by him dwelling in us. We are said to *walk* after either of these natures, when we make the properties or qualifications of either of them to be the *principles* of our practice. So, when we are taught to serve in *newness of Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter*, that so we may *bring forth fruit unto God*; the meaning is, that we must endeavour to bring forth the *fruits of holiness*, not by virtue of the *law*, that

that killing letter, to which the *flesh* is married, and by which the motions of sin are in us; but by virtue of the *Spirit*, and his manifold riches, which we partake of, in our *new state*, by a *mystical marriage with Christ*, Rom. vii. 4. 5. 6; and by virtue of such principles as belong to the *new state*, declared in the gospel, whereby the *Holy Spirit is ministered to us*.

6. This is the manner of walking, which the Apostle St. *Paul* directeth us unto, when he teacheth us by his own example, that the continual work of our lives should be, *to know Christ, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering*, Phil. iii. 10.

The **SECOND** thing proposed, was to lay before you some necessary instructions, that your steps may be guided aright, to continue and go forward in this way of holiness, until you be made perfect in Christ.

1. Let us observe and consider diligently in our whole conversation, that though we are partakers of a new holy state by faith in Christ, yet our natural state doth remain, in a measure, with all its corrupt principles and properties. As long as we live in this present world, our apprehensions of Christ, and his perfection, in this life, is only by faith; and this faith is imperfect; therefore, though we receive perfect Christ by faith, yet the measure and degree of enjoying him is imperfect. And, because all the blessings and perfection of our new state, as justification, the gift of the *Spirit*, of the *holy nature*, and the adoption of children, are seated and treasured up in Christ, and joined with him inseparably, we can receive them no further, than we receive Christ himself by faith; which we do in an imperfect measure and degree in this life. Now, seeing the degree and measure of our reception and enjoyment of Christ, with all the blessings of our new state in him, in this life, is imperfect, it followeth clearly, that our contrary natural state, with its properties, remaineth still in us in some degree, and is not perfectly abolished; so that all believers in this world, do, in some degree,

partake of these two contrary states. Believers have indeed put off *the old man*, and put on *the new man*, where *Christ is all and in all*, Col. iii. 10. 11; yet they are to put the *old man off*, and the *new man on* more and more, because the *old man remaineth still* in a measure. They are said to be, *not in the flesh, but in the Spirit*, because their being *in the Spirit*, is their best and lasting state; as denominations are usually taken from the better part: but yet the *flesh* is in them, and they find work enough to *mortify the deeds of it*, Rom. viii. 9. 13. Therefore several things which are contrary to each other, are frequently attributed to believers in the scripture, with respect to these two contrary states, wherein one place seems to contradict another; and yet both are *true* in divers respects. Thus holy *Paul* saith truly of himself, *I live, yet not I*, Gal. ii. 20; because he did *live to God* by *Christ living in him*: and yet, in another respect according to his *natural state*, he did not *live to God*. Again, he professeth, that he was *carnal, sold under sin*; and yet, on the contrary, that he *allowed not sin, but hated it*. He sheweth how both these were true concerning himself in divers respects. He saith, *In me, (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing*; and, *I delight to do the will of God according to the inward man*. *With the mind I myself serve the law of God*; but, *with the flesh, the law of sin*, Rom. vii. 14. 15. 18. 22. 25. *John* saith, *He that saith he hath no sin, deceiveth himself, and is a liar*, 1 John i. 8; and also that it is true, that *whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin*; for his seed, i. e. *Christ's*, the new spiritual nature, *remaineth in him*: and he cannot sin, because he is born of *GOD*, 1 John iii. 9. It is true, that we are weak and nothing, and yet strong and able to do all things, 2 Cor. xii. 10. 11. Phil. iv. 13. It is true, that believers are *dead, because of sin*; but *alive, because of righteousness*, Rom. viii. 10; and that, when they die by a natural death, they *shall never die*, John xi. 25. 26. These contrary things asserted concerning believers in scripture, do sufficiently manifest, that

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they partake of two contrary states in this life. And this is a plain, easy and ready way to reconcile these seeming contradictions, whatever other ways be used to reconcile some of them. And what reason is there to question, that the *old state* remaineth in believers, in *some* degrees, seeing all found *Protestants* acknowledge, that the sinful depravation and pollution of our natures, commonly called *original sin*, which is one principal part of this *old state*, doth remain in all *as long as* they live in this world? Now, though some penal evils may be said to remain in us, yet we cannot suppose, that this original pollution is continued in us as considered in *Christ*; but as considered in our *old state*, derived from the *first Adam*. Therefore the *first sin* of *Adam* is imputed, in *some* respect, even to those that are *justified by faith*; and they remain, in a measure, as aforesaid, under the punishment and curse denounced, Gen. ii. 17. *In the day thou eateth thereof, thou shalt surely die.* And, on this account, the same *original guilt and pollution* is propagated to the children of believing parents, as well as others, by *natural generation*. And, if such a great and fundamental part of the natural state continue in believers, as subjection to the guilt of the *first sin* and original corruption, which is one great part of the punishment and death threatened, and by which we are prone and inclined to all actual sins; why should we not judge, that other parts of the same state do likewise continue in them. It may be objected, That this doctrine of a two-fold state of believers in this life, doth much derogate from the perfection of our justification by *Christ*, and from the fulness of all the grace and spiritual blessings of *Christ*, and from the merits of his death, and the power of his Spirit; and that it greatly diminisheth the consolation of believers in *Christ*. But it may be easily vindicated from this objection, if we understand it rightly; for, notwithstanding this two-fold state, it still holdeth true, that believers, while they are on earth, have all the perfection of spiritual

blessings, justification, adoption, the gift of the Spirit, holiness, eternal life and glory, in and with Christ, *Eph. i. 3.* In the person of Christ, who is now in heaven, the old man is perfectly crucified; they are dead to sin, and to the law and its curse, and they are quickened together with him, and raised up with him, and made to sit in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, *Eph. ii. 6.* And believers do in their own persons receive and enjoy by faith all these perfect spiritual blessings of Christ, as far as they receive and enjoy Christ himself dwelling in them, and no farther. Thus far they are in a *new state*, free from the guilt, pollution, and punishment of sin, and so from the wrath of God and all miseries, and death itself, while they are in this world: yea all the guilt, pollution, and punishments of sin, and all evils whatever, which they are subject to according to their natural state, do them no harm according to this new state, but work for their good; and are no evils, but rather advantages to them, tending to the destruction only of the flesh, and to the perfection of the *new man in Christ*. Yet it holdeth true also, that our reception and enjoyment of Christ himself and all his perfections, is but in an imperfect measure and degree, until faith be turned into heavenly vision and fruition of Christ; and therefore our old sinful state, with the evils thereof, is not perfectly abolished during this life. This cannot be justly accounted any derogation from the merits of Christ's death, or from the power of his Spirit; seeing Christ never intended to bring to pass by his death, or by the power of his Spirit, that we should enjoy his spiritual blessings any further than we are in him, and enjoy him by faith; or that we should be made holy or happy according to the *flesh*, by a reformation of our natural state; as hath been shewed. Neither doth this diminish the consolation of believers in Christ: for thereby they may know, that they have the perfection of grace and happiness in Christ, and that they enjoy it in this world, as far as they enjoy Christ himself by faith;

and

and that they shall enjoy it in a perfect measure, and be fully freed from their sinful and miserable state, when that frame of nature which they received from the *first Adam*, is dissolved by death. This instruction is very useful to frame our souls aright for the practising holiness only by those gospel principles and means that belong to our *new state*, which we are partakers of by faith in Christ. And, except we know this, and keep it in mind, we shall never be fit to practise continually the great duties that tend to the *putting off the old man*, and *putting on the new man*, and *mortifying the deeds of the body by the Spirit*.

2. Despair of purging the *flesh* or *natural man* of its sinful lusts and inclinations, and of practising holiness, by *your* willing and resolving to do the best that lieth in *your own* power, and trusting on the grace of God and Christ, to help you in such resolutions and endeavours: rather resolve to trust on Christ, to *work in you to will and to do by his own power, according to his own good pleasure*. It is the great work of some zealous divines, in their preaching and writings, to stir up people to this resolution, wherein they place the *chiefest turning point from sin to godliness*. And they think, that this is not contrary to the life of faith, because they trust on the grace of God through Christ, to help them in all such resolutions and endeavours. Thus they endeavour to reform their old state, and to be made perfect in the flesh, instead of putting it off, and walking according to the new state in Christ. They that would cure it, and make it holy, by their own resolutions and endeavours, do act quite contrary to the design of Christ's death; for he died, not that the *flesh*, or old *natural man*, might be made *holy*; but that it might be *crucified*, and *destroyed* out of us, *Rom. vi. 6*; and that we might *live to God*, not *to ourselves*, or by any natural power of our own resolutions or endeavours, but by *Christ living in us*, and by his *Spirit bringing forth the fruits of righteousness in us*, *Gal. ii. 20*. and *v. 24. 25*. Therefore we must be content

to leave the natural man vile and wicked, as we found it, until it be utterly abolished by death ; though we must not allow its wickedness, but rather groan to be delivered from the body of this death, thanking God that there is a *deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord*. Our way to mortify sinful affections and lusts, must be, not by purging them out of the flesh, but by putting off the *flesh* itself, and getting above into Christ by faith, and walking in that *new nature* that is by him. Thus *the way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath*, Prov. xv. 24. Our willing, resolving and endeavouring, must be, to do the best, not that lieth in ourselves, or in our own power, but that Christ and the power of his Spirit shall be pleased to work in us : for in us, *i. e.* *in our flesh, there dwelleth no good thing*, Rom. vii. 18. We have great ground to trust in God and Christ for help in such resolutions and endeavours after holiness, as in things that are agreeable to the design of Christ in our redemption, and to the way of acting and living by faith. It is not enough for us to trust on Christ, to help us to act and endeavour so far only as creatures ; for so the worst of men are helped : he is the JEHOVAH *in whom they live, move, and have their being*, Acts xvii. 28. And 'tis likely the *Pharisee* would trust on God, to help in duty, as he would thank God for the performance of duty, Luke xviii. 11. And this is all the *faith* that many make use of in order to a holy practice. But we must trust on Christ, to enable us above the strength of our own natural power, by virtue of the new nature which we have in Christ, and by his Spirit dwelling and working in us ; or else our best endeavours will be altogether sinful, and mere hypocrisy, notwithstanding all the help for which we trust upon him. We must also take heed of depending for holiness upon any resolutions to walk in Christ, or any written covenants, or any holiness that we have already received ; for we must know, that the virtue of these things continues no longer than we continue walking in Christ, and Christ

in us. They must be kept up by the continual presence of Christ in us, as light is maintained by the presence of the sun, and cannot subsist without it.

3. You must not seek to procure forgiveness of sins, the favour of God, a new holy nature, life, and happiness, by any works of the moral law, or by any rites and ceremonies whatever; but rather you must work as those that have all these things already, according to your new state in Christ; as such who are only to receive them more and more by faith, as they are ready prepared and treasured up for you, and freely given to you, in your *spiritual head, the Lord Jesus Christ*. If we walk as those that are yet wholly to seek for the procurement of such enjoyments as these, it is a manifest sign, that, at present, we judge ourselves to be without them, and without Christ himself; in whose fulness they are all contained. And we have no ground to trust on Christ and his Spirit, to work holiness in us this way; for *we are dead to the legal covenant by the body of Christ*, Rom. viii. 4. and, *if we be led by the Spirit, we are not under the law*, Gal. v. 8. And, when some of the *Colossians* sought perfection in the like manner, by observation of *circumcision, holy meats, holy times, and other rudiments of the world*, the same Apostle blameth them for *not holding the head Jesus Christ*, and as such as were not *dead and risen with Christ*, but *living merely in the world*, Col. ii. 19, 20. and iii. 1. He clearly sheweth, that those who seek any saving enjoyments in such a way, do walk according to their old *natural state*; and that the true manner of living by faith in Christ, is, to walk as those that have all fulness and perfection of spiritual blessings in Christ by faith, and need not seek for them any other way to procure them for themselves. In this sense, it is a true saying, *That Believers should not act for life, but from life*. They must act as those that are not procuring life by their works, but as such who have already received and derived *life from Christ*, and act from the power and virtue received from him.

4. Think not, that you can effectually incline your heart to the immediate practise of holiness, by any such practical principles, as do only serve to bind, press and urge you to the performance of holy duties: but rather let such principles stir you up to go to Christ first by faith, that you may be effectually inclined to the immediate practice of holiness in him by gospel-principles, that strengthen and enable you, as well as oblige you thereunto. The *authority* of God the lawgiver, our absolute dependence on him as our creator, preserver, governor, in whose hand is our life, breath, and all our happiness here and for ever; his *all-seeing eye*, that searcheth our heart, discerneth our very thoughts and secret purposes; his *exact justice*, in *rendering to all according to their works*; his *almighty and eternal power*, to reward those that obey him, and to punish transgressors for ever; the *unspeakable joy of heaven*, and *terrible damnation of hell*: if a man make use of these obliging principles, to stir him to go to Christ for strength to act holily, he walketh like one that hath received Christ as his only life by faith; otherwise, he walketh like other natural men. For the natural man may be brought to act by these principles, partly by natural light, and more fully by scripture light, without any true knowledge of the way of salvation by Christ, and as if Christ had never come into the world. He that is made truly sensible of his own vileness and deadness by nature, will despair of ever bringing himself to holiness by principles that afford him no life and strength, but only lay an obligation upon him, and urge and press him to duty. And yet these obliging principles are very good and excellent in this right gospel-use of them; as the Apostle faith of the *law*, that it is *good, if it be used lawfully*, 1 Tim. i. 8. The humbled sinner knoweth well his obligations; but it is life and strength that he wanteth, and despairoth of walking according to such obligations, until he get life and strength by faith in Christ. Therefore these obliging principles do move him to go, in the first place;

place, to Christ, that so he may be enabled to answer their end, by the strengthening and enlivening principles of God's grace in Christ.

5. Stir up and strengthen yourself to perform the duties of holiness, by a firm persuasion of your enjoyment of Jesus Christ, and all spiritual and everlasting benefits through him. Your way to a holy practice, is, first, to conquer and expel unbelieving thoughts, by trusting confidently on Christ, and persuading yourselves by faith, that his righteousness, Spirit, glory, and all his spiritual benefits, are yours; and *that he dwelleth in you, and you in him*. In the might of this confidence, you shall go forth to the performance of the law; and you will be strong against sin and Satan, and *able to do all things through Christ that strengthens you*. This confident persuasion is of great necessity to the right framing and disposing our hearts to walk according to our *new state* in Christ. The life of faith principally consisteth in it. And herein it eminently appeareth, that *faith is an hand*, not only to *receive Christ*, but also to *work by him*; and that it cannot be *effectual for our sanctification*, except it contain in it some *assurance* of our interest in Christ; as hath been shewed. Thus we act as those that are above the sphere of nature, advanced to union and fellowship with Christ. We must know, that our *old man is crucified with him*; and we must reckon ourselves *dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. vi. 11. This is the means whereby we may be *filled with the Spirit, strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; which God would not require of us, if he had not appointed the means, Eph. vi. 10. How should it be rationally expected, that a man should act according to this *new state*, without *assurance* that he is in it? It is a rule of common prudence in all worldly callings and conditions, that every one must know and consider well his own state, lest he should act proudly above it, or福德ly below it. And it is a hard thing to bring some to a right estimate of their

own

own worldly conditions. If Christians knew their own strength *better*, they would enterprize *greater* things for the glory of God. But this knowledge is *difficultly attained*; it is only by faith and spiritual illumination. The best know but in part; and hence it is, that the *conversation* of believers falleth so much below their holy and heavenly calling.

6. Consider what endowments, privileges or properties of your *new state* are most meet and forcible to incline and strengthen your heart to **LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL**, and to **RENOUNCE ALL SIN**, and to give up yourself to **UNIVERSAL OBEDIENCE** to his commands; and strive to walk in the persuasion of them, that you may attain to the practice of these great duties. I may well join these together, because, to *love the Lord with all our hearts, might and soul*, is the *first and great commandment*, which influenceth us to *all obedience*, with a hatred and detestation of *all sin*, as it is *contrary and hateful to God*. The same effectual means that produceth the *one*, will also produce the *other*. And as holiness *chiefly consisteth* in these, so the *chief blessings* of our *holy state* are most meet and forcible to enable us for the immediate performance of them, and are to be *made use of* to this end by *faith*. Particularly, you must believe stedfastly, that all your sins are blotted out, and that you are reconciled to God, and have *access* into his favour by the blood of Christ, and that he is your God and Father, and altogether love to you, and your all-sufficient everlasting portion and happiness through Christ. Such apprehensions as these, do present God as a very lovely object to our hearts, and do thereby allure and win our affections, that cannot be forced by commands or threatenings, but must be sweetly won and drawn by allurements. We must not harbour any suspicions, that God will prove a terrible, everlasting enemy to us, if we would love him: for there is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment: he that feareth, is not made perfect in love. We love him; because

cause he first loved us, 1 John iv. 18, 19. David loved the Lord, because he was persuaded, that he was his strength, rock, fortress, his God, and the horn of his salvation, Psal. xviii. 1, 2. Love, that causeth obedience unto the law, must proceed from a good conscience purged from sin; and this good conscience must proceed from faith unfeigned, whereby we apprehend the remission of our sins, our reconciliation with God, by the merits of the blood of Christ. 1 Tim. i. 5. Heb. ix. 14. For the same end, that your hearts may be rightly fitted and framed for the performance of these principal duties, the holy scripture directeth you to walk in the persuasion of other principal endowments of your new estate: as, that you have fellowship with the father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, 1 John i. 3. that you are the temple of the living God, 2 Cor. vi. 16. that you live by the Spirit, Gal. v. 25. that you are called to holiness, and created in Christ Jesus unto good works; that God will sanctify you wholly, and make you perfect in holiness at the last, 1 Thess. v. 23. Eph. ii. 10. that your old man is crucified with Christ; and through him you are dead unto sin, and alive unto God; and, being made free from sin, you are become the servants of righteousness, and have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life, Rom. vi. 6, 22. Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is in glory, Col. iii. 4. Such persuasions as these, when they are deeply rooted and constantly maintained in our hearts, do strongly arm and encourage us to practise universal obedience, in opposition to every sinful lust; because we look upon it, not only as our duty, but our great privilege, to do all things through Christ strengthening us: and God doth certainly work in us both to will and to do by these principles, because they properly belong to the gospel, or new testament, which is the ministration of the Spirit, and the power of God unto salvation, 2 Cor. iii. 6, 8. Rom. i. 16.

7. For the performance of other duties of the law, you are to consider, not only these endowments, privileges

privileges and properties of your *new state*, which are meet and forcible to enable you to the love of God, and universal obedience, but also those that have a peculiar force and aptitude suitable to the special nature of such duties: and you must endeavour to *assure* yourselves of them by faith, that you may be encouraged and strengthened to perform the duties. I shall give you some instances of this manner of practice in several duties, whereby you may the better understand how to guide yourselves in the rest. And, as to the duties of the *first table*, if you would DRAW NEAR to God in a duty of his worship with a *true heart*, you must do it in *full assurance of faith* concerning your enjoyment of Christ, and his salvation. And would you perform the great duty of TRUSTING on the Lord with all your heart, casting your care upon him, and committing the disposal of yourself to him in all your concerns? Persuade yourself through Christ, that God, according to his promise, *will never fail you; nor forsake you*; that he taketh a *fatherly care of you*; that he will *with-hold no good thing from you*; and will make *all things to work for your good*. And thus you will be strong and courageous in the practice of this duty: whereas, if you live in a mere suspence concerning your interest in the privileges, you will be subject to *carnal fears, and carking cares*, in despite of your heart; and you will be prone to trust on the arm of flesh, though your conscience tell you plainly, that, in so doing, you incur the heinous guilt of idolatry. Would you be strengthened to SUBMIT to the hand of God with a chearful patience, in bearing any affliction, and death itself? The way to fortify yourselves, is, to believe assuredly, That your *afflictions which are but for a moment, do work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; that Christ is *your gain in death and life*; that his grace is *sufficient for you*, and his strength made perfect in your weakness; and that he will *not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able*; and will at last make you more than conquerors over all evil.

Until

Until you attain to such persuasions as these, you will be prone to fret and murmur under the burden of affliction, and to use indirect means to deliver yourselves, notwithstanding the clearest convictions to the contrary. Would you LIMIT yourselves to the observation of God's own institutions in his worship? Believe, that you are *complete in Christ*, and have all perfection of spiritual blessings in him; and that God will build you up in Christ by the ordinances of his own appointment. This will make you account his ordinances sufficient, and mens traditions and inventions needless in the worship of God: whereas, if you do not apprehend all fulness in Christ, you will be like the *Papists*, prone to catch at every straw, and to multiply superstitious observations without end, for the supply of your spiritual wants. Would you CONFESS your sins to God, PRAY to him and PRAISE him heartily for his benefits? Would you praise him for affliction, as well as prosperity? Believe assuredly, that *God is faithful and just to forgive your sin through Christ*; that you are made *an holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praises, that are acceptable to God through Christ*; and that God heareth your prayers, and will fulfil them, so far as they are good for you; and that all God's *ways are mercy and truth toward you*, whether he prosper or afflict you in this life. If you be altogether in doubt, or otherwise persuaded, concerning these privileges, all your confessions, prayers and praises will be but heartless, lip-labours, slavish or *Pharisaical* works. In like manner, you will be enabled to HEAR and RECEIVE the *word*, as the *word of God*, and to MEDITATE on it with delight; and you will be willing to know the strictness and spirituality of the commands of God, and to try and examine your ways impartially by them, if you believe assuredly, that the word is the *power of God unto salvation*; and that Christ is your *GREAT PHYSICIAN, willing and able to heal you, be the case never so bad*; and, where your sin abounds, his grace towards you doth so much the more abound; whereas, without

without these comfortable apprehensions, all the works of hearing, meditation, self-examination, will be but uncouth heartless works, and they will be performed negligently, and by halves, or hypocritically, and out of slavish fear, with much reluc-tancy, without any good will, or readines of mind. So also, for the right RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS, you will find yourselves much strengthened by believing, that you may have communion with God and Christ in them, and that you have a great High Priest to bear the iniquity of your *holy things*, and to make you for ever accepted before the Lord.

In the same way, you are to apply yourselves to all duties towards your *neighbour*, required in the *second table* of the law, by acting in a *persuasion* of such privileges of your *new estate* as have a peculiar force to encourage and strengthen you for the performance of them. That you may *LOVE your neighbour as yourself, and DO to him in all things as you would be should DO to you, without partiality and self-seeking*; that you may *GIVE him his due honour, and ABSTAIN from injuring him in his life, chastity, wordly estate, good name, or from COVETING any thing that is his, according to the several commands in the second table of the decalogue*; you must walk in a *persuasion*, not only that these things are just and equitable toward your fellow-creatures, and that you are strictly bound to the performance of them; but that they are the *will of your heavenly Father, who hath begotten you according to his own image in righteousness and true holiness, and hath given you his Spirit, that you may be like minded to him in all things*; and that they are the *mind of Christ, who dwelleth in you, and you in him*; that God and Christ are kind, tender-hearted, long-suffering, full of goodness to men, whether good or bad, friends or enemies, poor or rich; and that *Christ came into the world, not to destroy, but to save*, that the injuries done to you by your neighbours, can do you no harm; and you need not seek any

any good for yourselves by injuring them, because you have all desirable happiness in Christ ; and all things, though intended by your enemies for your *hurt*, certainly work for your *good* through Christ. Such apprehensions as these, wrought in us by the spirit of faith, do certainly beget in us a right frame of spirit, thoroughly furnished for every good work towards our neighbour. Likewise, your hearts will be *purified to unfeigned love of the brethren in Christ*, and you will walk toward them with all *lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another in love*, if you maintain a *stedfast belief and persuasion* of those manifold bonds of love, whereby you are inseparably joined with them through Christ ; as particularly, that *there is one body, and one Spirit, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*. Finally, you will be able to *abstain from all fleshly and wordly lusts, that war against the soul*, and hinder all godlessness, by an *assured persuasion*, not merely, that *gluttony, drunkenness, lechery, are filthy swinish abominations* ; and that the *pleasures, profits and honours of the world, are vain, empty things* ; but that you are *crucified to the flesh and the world, and quickened, raised, and sit in heavenly places together with Christ* ; and that you have *pleasures, profits, honours in Christ, to which the best things in the world are not worthy to be compared* ; and that you are *members of Christ, the temple of his Spirit, citizens of heaven, children of the day, not of the night, nor of darkness* ; so that it is below your state and dignity to practise *deeds of darkness, and mind fleshly worldly things*. Thus I have given instances enough, to stir you up to acquaint yourselves with the manifold endowments, privileges, properties of your new state in Christ, as they are discovered in the *gospel of your salvation*, whereby the new nature is fitted for holy operations ; as the common nature of man is furnished with the endowments necessary for those functions and operations to which it is designed ; and also to stir you up,

to make use of them by faith, as they serve to strengthen you either for universal obedience, or for particular duties. And, by this manner of walking, your hearts will be comforted, and *established in every good word and work*; and you will grow in holiness, until you attain to *perfection in Jesus Christ*.

8. If you endeavour to grow in grace, and in all holiness, *trust assuredly*, that God will enable you, by this manner of walking, to do every thing that is necessary for his glory, and your own everlasting salvation; and that he will graciously accept of that obedience through Christ which you are enabled to perform according to the measure of your faith. And therefore attempt not the performance of duty in any other way, though you cannot yet attain to do so much as you would in this way. This is a necessary instruction to establish us in the life of faith, that the sense of our manifold failings and defects may not move us either to despair, or to return to the use of carnal principles and means, for help against our corruptions, as accounting this way of living and acting by faith, to be insufficient for our sanctification and salvation. The Apostle St. Paul exhorts the Galatians to *walk in the Spirit*, though *the flesh lust against the Spirit, so that they cannot do the things that they would*, Gal. v. 16. 17.

D I R E C T I O N. XIII.

Endeavour diligently to make the right use of all means appointed in the word of God, for the obtaining and practising holiness, only in this way of believing in Christ, and walking in him, according to your new state by faith.

E X P L I C A T I O N.

TWO things are observable here.

FIRST, That though all holiness be effectually attained by the life of faith in Christ, yet the use of any means appointed in the word for attaining and promoting

promoting holiness, is not hereby made void, but rather established. We do indeed assert, and profess, that *a true and lively faith in Christ is alone sufficient and effectual, through the grace of God, to receive Christ and all his fulness, so far as it is necessary in this life, for our justification, sanctification, and eternal salvation*: but yet we also assert, and profess, that *several means are appointed of God for the begetting, maintaining and increasing this faith, and the acting and exercising it, in order to the attainment of its end*; and that *these means are to be used diligently*, which are mentioned in the sequel. True believers find by experience, that their faith needeth such helps: and they that think themselves above any need of them, do *reject the counsel of God* against themselves.

The SECOND thing observable, and principally designed, in this direction, is, *the right manner of using all the means of holiness*, for the obtaining and practising it in no other way besides that of believing in Christ, and walking in him according to our new state by faith. We must use them as *helps* to the life of faith, in its beginning, continuance, and growth; and as *instruments* subservient to faith, the *principal instrument*, in all its acts and exercises, whereby the soul *receiveth Christ, and walketh in all holiness by him*. We must beware, lest we use them rather in *opposition* than in *subordination* to the way of *sanctification*, and salvation by free grace in Christ, through faith; and lest, by our abuse of them, they be made rather *hindrances*, than *helps* to our faith. We must not *idolize* any of the means, and put them into the place of *Christ*, as the *Papists* do, *by trusting in them*; as if they were *effectual* to *confer grace to the soul, by the work that is done in the use of them*. Neither may we use them, as *works of righteousness*, to be performed as *conditions* for the procuring the favour of God, and the salvation of Christ. Neither must they be accounted so *absolutely necessary* to salvation, as if a true faith were *void*, and of *none effect*, when we are *debarred* from the enjoyment of several of them.

The holy scriptures, with all the means of grace appointed therein, are *able to make us wise unto salvation, no other way than by faith in Jesus Christ*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. And therefore our wise endeavour must be, not to use them in *any opposition to the grace of God in Christ*. For God's ordinances are like the *cherubims of glory*, made with their *faces looking towards the mercy-seat*. They are made, to guide us to Christ for salvation by faith alone. If any man turn them to another use, it is a great violation of divine institutions; as if any sacrilegious person had presumed to turn the faces of the cherubims from the mercy-seat some other way. This *right use* of the means of grace, is a point wherein many are ignorant, that use them with great zeal and diligence; and thereby they do not only lose their labour, and the benefit of the means, but also they wrest and pervert them to their own destruction. That you may not stumble and fall by the same pernicious error, I shall shew particularly how several of the principal means of holiness appointed in the word of God, are to be made use of in that *right manner* expressed in the direction.

1. We must endeavour diligently to know the *word of God* contained in the holy scripture, and to improve it to this end, that we may be *made wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus*, 2 Tim. iii. 15. Other means of salvation are necessary to the more abundant *well-being* of our faith, and of our new state in Christ; but *this* is absolutely necessary to the *very being* thereof: because *faith cometh by hearing the word of God*, and receiveth Christ as manifested by the word; as I have before proved. But here our great work must be, to get such a knowledge of the word as is necessary and sufficient to guide us in receiving Christ, and walking in him by faith. You must not be of their minds that think the knowledge of the ten commandments to be sufficient to salvation, or that would have *mysteries* to remain hid from the understanding of the vulgar, and *nothing*

nothing to be preached to them but what they can readily assent to, and receive by the light that is in all men ; of which mind, it may be, some Ministers are, who unwittingly agree with the *Quakers* in a fundamental of their heresy. But you must endeavour chiefly, to know the mystery of the Father and the Son, as it is discovered in the gospel, wherein are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, Col. ii. 2. 3 ; which to know, is eternal life, and the ignorance of it, is death eternal, John xvii. 3. 2 Cor. iv. 3. You must know, that Christ is the end of the law, Rom. x. 4 ; and therefore you must endeavour to know the commands of the law ; not that you may be enabled, by that knowledge, to practise them immediately, and so to procure salvation by your works ; but rather, by your knowledge of them, you may be made sensible of your inability to perform them, and of the enmity that is in your heart against them, and the wrath that you are under for breaking them, and the impossibility of being saved by your own works ; that so you may fly to Christ for refuge, and trust only to the free grace of God for justification, and strength to fulfil the law acceptably through Christ in your conversation. And, for this end, you must endeavour to learn the utmost strictness of the commands, the exact perfection and spiritual purity which they require, that you may be the more convinced of sin, and stirred up to seek unto Christ for remission of sin, for purity of heart, and spiritual obedience, and be brought nearer to the enjoyment of him ; as Christ testified, that the Scribe, who understood the greatness of that command of loving the Lord with all the heart and soul, was not far from the kingdom of God, Matth. xii. 34. The most effectual knowledge for your salvation, is, to understand these two points ; the desperate sinfulness and misery of your own natural condition, and the alone sufficiency of the grace of God in Christ for your salvation : that you may be abased as to the flesh and exalted in Christ alone. And for the better understanding these

two main points, you should learn how the *first Adam was the figure of the second*, Rom. v. 14; how *sin and death came upon all the natural seed of the first Adam*, by his disobedience in *eating the forbidden fruit*, and how *righteousness and everlasting life come upon all the spiritual seed of the second Adam*, Jesus Christ, by his *obedience unto death, even the death of the cross*. You also should learn the *true difference* between the two *covenants*, the *old* and the *new*, or the *law* and the *gospel*; that the former shutteth us up under the *guilt and power of sin*, and the *wrath of God and his curse*, by its *rigorous terms*, *Do all the commandments, and live*; and, *Cursed are you, if you do them not, and fail in the least point*; the latter *openeth the gates of righteousness and life to all believers*, (i. e. the *new covenant*), by its *gracious terms*, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and live*; (i. e. *all your sins shall be forgiven, and holiness and glory shall be given to you freely by his merit and Spirit*). Furthermore, you should learn the *gospel principles* that you are to walk by, for the attainment of *holiness in Christ*. And here I shall mind you particularly, that you would be a good proficient in *Christian learning*, if you get a good understanding of the 6th and 7th chapters of the *Apostle St. Paul to the Romans*; where the *powerful principles of sanctification* are *purposely treated of*, and *differenced from those weak and ineffectual principles* which we are most naturally prone to walk by.

2. Another means to be used diligently for the promoting the life of faith, is, *examination of our state and ways according to the word*. Think not, that you must begin this work with doubting whether God will extend mercy to you, and save you; and that you must leave this a question wholly under debate, until you have found out how to resolve it by self examination. You should rather begin the work with *much assurance of faith*, that though you may at present find your heart never so wicked and reprobate, (as many of God's choicest servants have found), yet the *door of mercy is open for you*, and that God *will certainly*

certainly save you for ever, if you put your trust in his grace through Christ. If we begin the work with this confidence, it will make us impartial, and not afraid to find out the worst of ourselves, and willing to judge, That our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, beyond what we can find out, *Jer. xvii. 9.* And, if we have any holy qualifications, this confidence will preserve them in their vigour and brightness. Mispend not your time, as many do, in poring upon your hearts, to find whether you be good enough to trust on Christ for your salvation, or to find whether you have any faith, before you dare be so bold as to act faith in Christ. But know, that though you cannot find that you have any faith or holiness, yet, if you will now believe on him that justifieth the ungodly, it shall be accounted to you for righteousness. *Rom. iv. 5.* There are also some that can make large discourses of the workings of God upon their hearts, and are prone to talk unseasonably, with vain glorying, of their own experiences; when, at last, all their experiences are not sufficient to evidence, that they ever attained to the least measure of true saving faith. Therefore, that we may not unjustly condemn or justify our faith, by proceeding on insufficient evidences in its trial, *our best way is, to examine it by the inseparable properties of a true saving faith, by putting to ourselves such questions as these:* Are we made thoroughly sensible of our sinfulness, and of the deadness and misery of our natural state, so as to despair absolutely of ever attaining to any righteousness, holiness, or true happiness, while we continue in it? Are the eyes of our understanding enlightened, to see the excellency of Christ, and the alone-sufficiency and all-sufficiency of his grace for our salvation? Do we prefer the enjoyment of him above all things, and desire it with our whole heart, as our only happiness, whatsoever we may suffer for his sake? Do we desire with our whole heart, to be delivered from the power and practice of sin, as well as from the wrath of God, and the pains of hell? Do our hearts come to Christ,

and lay hold on him for salvation, by trusting him only, and endeavouring to trust on him confidently, notwithstanding all fears and doubts that assault us? If you find in yourself a faith that hath these properties, your remaining work, is, to continue and grow in it more and more, and to walk worthy of it. You should also examine the *fruits* of your faith, and try whether you can *shew your faith by your works*, as you are taught, *Jam. ii. 18.* And here you are not only to enquire, whether your inclinations, purposes, affections, and actions, be materially good and holy; but also, by what principles they are bred and influenced? Whether it be by slavish fears of hell, and mercenary hopes of getting heaven by your works, which are legal and carnal principles that can never breed true holiness; or by gospel-principles, as by love to God, because God hath loved you first, and to Christ, because he hath died for you; and by the hope of eternal life, as the free gift of God through Christ, and dependance on God, to sanctify you by his Spirit according to his promises? Remember, that the New Testament is *the ministration of the Spirit*, *2 Cor. iii. 6*; and the Spirit will sanctify us, not by legal, but by gospel principles.

3. *Meditation on the word of God* is of very great use and advantage for the attainment and practice of holiness through faith in Christ. It is a duty whereby the soul doth feed and ruminate upon the word as its spiritual food, and digesteth it, and turneth it into nourishment, whereby we are strengthened for every good work. An habitual knowledge of the word will not profit us, without an active minding it by frequent meditation. But they that are regenerated by the word, find by experience, that their spiritual life is maintained and increased by often minding the same word: and therefore, as *new born babes, they desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby*, *1 Pet. ii. 2.* and would, by the preachers, be put often in remembrance of the same things, that they may feed upon them by meditation, though they know

know them already, and are established in the present truth. We must meditate believingly on Christ's saving benefits; as they are discovered in the gospel; which is the only doctrine which is the *power of God to our salvation*, and whereby the quickening Spirit is ministered to us, that is able to build us up, and give us an inheritance among all them which are sanctified, Rom i. 16. 2 Cor. iii. 6. Acts xx. 32. You must take special care to act faith in your meditation; mix the word of God's grace with it, or else it will not profit you, Heb. iv. 2. And, if you set the *loving-kindness of God* frequently before your eyes, by meditating on it believingly, you will be strengthened to walk in the truth, Psal. xxvi. 3. and, by beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, you will be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

4. The sacrament of *baptism* must needs be of great use to promote the life of faith, if it be made use of according to its nature and institution; because it is a *seal of the righteousness of faith*, as *circumcision* was formerly, Rom. iv. 11. But then we must take heed of making it a *seal of the contrary righteousness of works*; as the carnal Jews did, that sought to be *justified by the law of Moses*; and as many Christians do, that transform the *new covenant into a covenant of works*, requiring sincere obedience to all the laws of Christ, as the condition of our *justification*; into which *new devised covenant* they think themselves to be *entered by their baptism*. We should often remember, that we are made Christ's disciples by *baptism*, and engaged to hear him, rather than *Moses*, and to believe on him for our salvation; as *John* baptized with the *baptism of repentance*, saying to the people, that they should believe on him that should come after him, i. e. on Christ *Jesus*. It is the proper nature and tendency of *baptism*, to guide us to faith in Christ alone for remission of sins, holiness, and all salvation, by union and fellowship with him.

5. The sacrament of the *Lord's supper* is as a spiritual feast to nourish our faith, and to strengthen us to walk in all holiness by Christ living and working in us. Its end is, not only that we may remember Christ's death in the *history*, but in the *mystery* of it; as, that *his body was broken for us*, that *his blood is the blood of the new testament or covenant shed for us, and for many, for the remission of sins*; that so we may receive and enjoy all the promises of the new covenant which are recorded, *Heb. viii. 10. 11. 12.* Its end is, to assure us, that, when we *truly believe on him, he is as really and closely united to us by his Spirit, as the food which we eat and drink, is united to our bodies, Christ himself, John vi.* doth more fully explain this *mystery*. Furthermore, this sacrament doth not only put us in mind of the spiritual blessings wherewith we are blessed in Christ, and our enjoyment of them by faith, but also it is a means and instrument, whereby God doth really exhibit and give forth Christ and his salvation to true believers, and whereby he doth stir up, and strengthen believers, to receive and feed upon Christ by present actings of faith, while they partake of the outward elements. When Christ saith, *Eat, drink; this is my body, this is my blood*, no less can be meant, than that Christ doth as truly give his body and blood to true believers in that ordinance, as the bread and cup; and they do as truly receive it by faith. / As if a prince invest a subject in some honourable office, by delivering to him a staff, sword or signet, and say to him, *Take this staff, sword, or signet; this is such an office or preferment*; or, if a father should deliver a deed for conveyance of land to his son, and say, *Take it as thy own; this is such a farm or manor*; how can such expressions import anything less, in common sense and reason, than a present, gift, and conveyance of the Offices, preferments, and lands, by and with those outward signs? Therefore the Apostle Paul asserteth, that the *bread in the Lord's supper, is the communion of the body of Christ, and the cup is the communion of his blood, 1 Cor. x. 16.*

x. 16. which sheweth, that Christ's body and blood are *really* communicated to us, and we do *really* partake of them, as well as of the bread and cup. We ought warily to conceive, that the true body and blood of Christ are given to us, with the bread and wine, in a *spiritual* *mysterious* *manner*, by the unsearchable operation of the holy spirit, *uniting Christ and us together by faith*, without any *transubstantiation* in the outward elements.

6. Prayer is to be made use of as a means of living by faith in Christ according to the new man. And it is the making our requests with supplication and thanksgiving. That it is to be used so, as an eminent means, appears, because God requireth it, 1 Thess. v. 17. Rom. xii. 12. ; it is our *priestly work*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. compared with *Psal. cxii. 2.* ; and the *property of saints*, 1 Cor. i. 2. ; and *God is a God bearing prayer*, *Psal. lxxv. 2.* God will be prayed to by his people, for the benefit that he is minded to bestow upon them, when once he hath enabled them to pray though at first he is found of those that seek him not, *Ezek. xxxvi. 37. Phil. i. 19. 20.* that he may prepare them for thanksgiving, and make benefits double benefits to them, *Psal. lxvi. 16. 18. 19.* and 1. 15. 2 Cor. i. 10. 11. Though his will be not changed by this means ; yet it is accomplished ordinarily, and his purpose is to accomplish it this way. And therefore, *trusting assuredly* should not make us neglect, but rather perform this duty, 2 Sam. vii. 27. But the great work is, to practise this duty rightly for holiness, only by faith in Christ. Here we had need say, *Lord, teach us to pray*, Luke xi. 1 ; and that not only as to the *matter*, but as to the *manner*. The spirit of God only guideth and enableth our souls to pray aright. And, that you may do so, take these rules.

(1.) You must pray with your *hearts and spirits*, with *understanding*. And with sincere hearty desire of the good things we ask in prayer. And you must pray with *attention*, minding yourselves what you pray.

(2.) You must pray *in the name of Christ* : for the
Spirit

Spirit glorifies Christ, xvi. 14; and leadeth us to God through Christ, Eph. ii. 18. It is not enough to conclude our prayers, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*; but we must come for blessings in the garments of our elder brother, and must depend upon his worthiness and strength for all. So also we must praise God for all things in his name, as things received for his sake, and by him, Eph. v. 20. *Praying in the Spirit is upon gospel, not legal principles, Rom. vii. 6. 2 Cor. iii. 3;* with despair of acceptance, otherwise than upon Christ's account, Den. ix. 18. If your enlargements, strugglings, meltings, have been never so great; yet without this all is abominable.

(3.) Hence you must not think to be accepted for the goodness of your prayers, and trust on them as works of righteousness; which is making idols of your prayers, and putting them into the place of Christ; quite contrary to *praying in the name of Christ.*

(4.) Pray to God as your Father, through Christ as your Saviour, in faith of remissions of sins, and your acceptance with God, and the obtaining all other things which you desire of him, as far as is necessary for your salvation. By this you may judge whether you have prayed rightly, more than by your melting affection, or largeness in expression. Here lies the strength, life, and powerfulness of prayer. Set faith on work, and you will be powerful and prevail.

(5.) You must strive, in prayer, to stir up and act every other sanctifying grace, through faith moving you thereto; as, godly sorrow, peace, joy, hope, desire and love to God, and love to all his commands, Psal. cxix. 4. 5; and to his people out of love to him, Psalm. cxxii. 8.

(6.) Strive to bring your soul into order by this duty, however disordered by guilt, anguish, inordinate cares, or fears, Psal. xxxii. 1. 5. lv. 16. 17. 20. 22. & lvix. 32. Phil. iv. 6. 7. 1 Sam. i. A watch must be often wound up. You must wrestle in prayer against your unbelief, doubting, fears, cares, reluctance

reluctancy of the flesh to that which is good ; against all evil lusts and desires, coldness of affection, impatience, and trouble of spirit. Stir up yourselves to the duty, *Col. ii. 1. 2. Isa. lxiv. 7.* Though the flesh be cross and reluctant, we must not yield, but resist by the Spirit, *Math. xxvi. 41.* And thus we shall find the Spirit helping our infirmities, *Rom. viii. 26.*

27.

(7). You must make a good use of the *whole matter*, and *all the manner* of prayer, as ordinary and extraordinary exigencies may require. As, in *confession*, you must condemn yourself according to the flesh, but not as you are in Christ. In *supplication*, you must endeavour to work up your heart to a godly sorrow, *Psal. xxxviii. 18*; and a holy sense of your own sin and misery ; and lay before you the aggravations thereof, *Psal. li. 3. and cii.* And you must add *pleadings* to your petitions, with such arguments as may serve to strengthen faith, and to stir up and kindle affection, *Job xxii. 4.* Which pleadings are taken from *attributes*, *Numb. xiv. 17. 18*; *promises*, *2 Sam. vii. 27. 28, &c. Gen. xxxii. 9. 12*; the *equity* of our cause, *Psal. xvii. 2. 3*; the advantage and benefit of the thing, to the *glory of God*, and our *comfort*, *Psal. cxv. 1. 2, and lxxix. 9. 10. 13.* And we must make use also of *praise* and *thanksgiving*, to stir up peace, joy, love, &c. *Gen. xxxiii. 10. Psal. xviii. 1. 2. 3. xxxiii. 1. lxxiv. 14. and civ. 34.* Especially be much in praising God for mercies of the new state in Christ, *Eph. i. 3*; and then you will the better give thanks for all benefits on his account, *Eph. v. 20. 1 Thess. v. 18*; and plead those benefits, to stir up to faith and duty.

(8). You must not *confine and limit your prayers by any prescribed form*; seeing it is impossible that any such forms should be contrived, as should answer and fit all the various conditions and necessities of the soul at all times. I do not condemn *all forms*, as that made by Christ, the *Lord's prayer*; though it were easy to shew, that Christ *never intended it for a form*

of

of prayer, so as to bind any to the precise form of words ; and it is plain the Spirit of God hath expressed it in different words, *Matth. vi. Luke xi.* But better to pray by that form, or other forms, than not at all.

9. Another means appointed of God, is, *singing of psalms*, God hath commanded it in the New Testament, *Col. iii. 16. Eph. v. 19.* *David* composed psalms by the Spirit to be sung publickly, *2 Sam. xxiii. 1. 2* ; yea privately too, *Psal. xl. 3.* Other songs also were made upon several occasions, and used. Which teacheth, that it is lawful for us to do so, if they be according to the word, *Isa. xxxviii. 9. 14.* The matter of scripture may be sung, *Psal. cxix. 54.* Christ and his disciples sang a hymn, *Matth. xxvi. 30.*

But the right manner of this duty is chiefly to be noted. And, here, (1.) Trust not upon the *melody of the voice* ; as if that pleased God, who delighteth only in the *melody of the heart.* *Col. iii. 16.*

2. You must use it for the same end as meditation and *prayer*, according to the nature of what is sung ; i. e. to quicken *faith*, *2 Chron. xx. 21. 22. Acts xvi. 25. 26* ; and *joy* and *delight* in the Lord, *glorying* in him, *Psal. civ. 33. 34. cv. 3. cxlix. 1. 2*, and *xxxiii. 1. 2. 3.* You are never right until you can be heartily merry in the Lord, to act *joy* and *mirth* holily, *Jam. v. 13. Eph. v. 19* ; and also to get more *knowledge* and *instruction* in heavenly mysteries, and in your duty, *teaching* and *admonishing*, *Col. iii. 16.* Many psalms are *Maschils*, (as their title is), i. e. *psalms of instruction*. Thus we are to sing such psalms as speak in the first person, though we cannot apply them to ourselves as words uttered by ourselves concerning ourselves, and in this we do not lie. *David* speaks of Christ as of himself, as a pattern of affliction and virtue, to instruct others ; and we sing such psalms, not as our words, but words for our instruction. And therein we do not lie, any more than the *Levites*, the sons of *Korah*, or *Jeduthun*, or other musicians bound to sing them, *Psal. v. xxxix. and xlii.* Though it be good to personate all the good that we can ; yet we have

so much liberty in the use of psalms, that though we cannot apply all to ourselves, as speaking and thinking the same, yet we shall answer the end, if we sing for our instruction, as in *Psal. vi. xxvi. xlvi. ci.* and *cxxxii.* And psalms have a peculiar fitness for teaching and instructing ; because the pleasantness of metre said or sung, is very helpful to the memory. See *Deut. xxxi. 19. 21.*

3. *Fasting*, is also an ordinance of God to be used for the same purpose and end, and is commended to us under the New Testament, *Matth. ix. 15.* and *xvii. 21.* *1 Cor. vii. 5.* And we have examples of it, *Acts xiii. 2. 3,* and *xiv. 23.* Under the Old Testament, there were frequent commands for it, and examples, chiefly upon occasion of extraordinary afflictions. But the great matter is, to use it *rightly* as followeth :

1. Imagine not, that prayer is not acceptable without it ; for this is against faith.

(2). Use it *as a help to extraordinary prayer and humiliation* ; that the mind may not be unsuited for it, by eating, drinking, or bodily pleasures, *Joel ii. 13. Isa. xxii. 12. 13. Zech. xii. 13.* — 14. It is good only as a help to the soul, removing impediments.

(3). Use it in such a measure as may be proper for its end ; without which it is worth nothing. If abstinence divert your mind, by reason of a gnawing appetite, then you had better eat sparingly, as *Daniel*, in his great fast, *chap. x. 2. 3.* Christ would not have his weak disciples necessitated to the duty, *Matth. ix. 14. 15.*

(4). You may expect here something to be spoken of *vows*. But I shall only say this of them. Think not to bring yourselves to good by vows and promises, as if the strength of your own law could do it, when the strength of God's law doth it not. We bring children to make promises of amendment ; but we know how well they keep them. The devil will urge you

you to vow, and then to break, that he may perplex your conscience the more.

(5). Another great means, is, *fellowship and communion with the saints*, Acts ii. 42.

FIRST, This means must be used *diligently*. Whosoever God saveth, should be added to some visible church, and come into communion of other saints; and, if they have not opportunity for it, their heart should be bent towards it. This communion with saints is to be exercised in *private converse*, Psal. ci. 4. 5. 6. 7; and in *publick assemblies*, Heb. x. 25. Zech. xiv. 16. 17. And, doubtless, it ought to be used for the attainment of *holiness*: As may be proved,

1st, in *general*, Because God *communicates all salvation, to a people ordinarily by, or in a church*; either by taking them into *fellowship*, or holding forth the light of *truth* by his *churches to the world*.

2dly, in *particular*, Fellowship with the saints conduceth to *holiness* many ways.

1. By manifold *helps to holiness*, which are received thereby: As,

(1). The *word and sacraments*, Acts ii. 42. Isa. ii. 3. Matth. xxviii. 19. 20; and all the *ministerial office and labour* in watching over souls, Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Theff. v. 12. 13. Isa. xxv. 6. None of these helps can be enjoyed without *fellowship of saints*, each with other. And, if believers had been to have stood *single* by themselves, and not maintained *fellowship* with each other, for mutual assistance and common good, none of these things could have continued; neither could any believer have been extant at this day, in an ordinary way, but even the very name of believers had been abolished.

(2). *Mutual prayer*, which is the more forcible when all pray together Matth. xviii. 19. 20. 2 Cor. i. 10. 11. Jam. v. 16. Rom. xv. 30.

(3). *Mutual admonition, instruction, consolation*, to help each other when they are ready to fall, and to promote the good work in each other, 1 Theff. v. 14. *He that walketh with wise men, shall be wise*, Prov.

xiii. 20. *Woe to him that is alone when he falleth.* See *Ecclesi. iv. 9.* — 12. In church-fellowship there are many helpers, many to watch. Soldiers have their security in company; and the church is compared to an army with banners, *Song vi. 4. 10.* So, for quickning affections, *Iron sharpeneth iron, Prov. xxvii. 17.* Likewise, *The counsel of a friend, like ointment and perfume, rejoiceth the heart, Prov. xxvii. 9.* Yea the wounds and reproofs of the righteous are as precious balm, *Psal. cxli. 5.*

(4). *External supports*; which mitigate afflictions, and are to be communicated mutually, *Eph. iv. 28. 1 Peter iv. 9. 10.* The affliction is increased, when none careth for our souls, *Psal. cxlii. 4.*

(5). *Excommunication*, when offences are exceeding heinous, or men obstinate in sin. This ordinance is appointed for the *destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved, 1 Cor. v. 5.* For excommunication cuts off actual communion only, until repentance be evident.

(6). The lively examples of saints are before our eyes in church-fellowship, to teach and encourage, *Phil. iii. 17. and iv. 9. 2 Tim. iii. 10. 11. 2 Cor. ix. 2.*

(7). By those holy *duties* that are required and do appertain to this fellowship and communion. All acts that belong to this fellowship, are *holy*; as, *bearing, receiving the sacraments, prayer, mutual admonitions, &c.* I shall consider some such holy acts, whereby we are rather *doers* than *receivers*, and which we perform towards others: As,

(1). *Godly discourses, teaching, admonishing, and comforting others in Christ; which we cannot so perform towards others, as towards those we have a strict fellowship with in Christ.*

(2). In *helping, succouring, and conversing with Christ in his members.* We do good to Christ in his members in church-fellowship; and we ourselves, as members of Christ, act as well *from Christ as toward Christ*; whereas, if we do good to others *without* we

we do good only for Christ's sake, but not to Christ,
Matth. xxv. 35.—49. Psal. xvi. 2. 3.

SECONDLY, The means must be used *rightly*, for the attaining of holiness *only in Christ*.

1. One rule is, *Do not trust on church-membership, or on churches*, as if this or that relation in fellowship commended you to God of itself; whereas, a church way is but a help to fellowship with Christ, and walking in the duties of that fellowship. We must not glory in *Paul, Apollos, Cephas*, but in Christ; else we *glory in the flesh and in men*, 1 Cor. i. 12. 13, and iii. 21. Trusting on church-privileges is an inlet to formality and licentiousness, *Jer. vii. 4. 9. 10*; and thence the corruption of churches, *Ja. i. 10. 2 Tim. ii. 20*.

2. Follow no church *any farther than you may follow it in the way of Christ*; and keep fellowship with it only upon the account of Christ, because it follows Christ, and hath fellowship with Christ, 1 John i. 3. Zech. viii. 23. If a church revolt from Christ, we must not follow it, how ancient so ever it may be. We are indeed to hear the church, but not any farther than it speaketh as a true church, according to the voice of the Shepherd, *John x. 27*. We must subject ourselves to Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of his mysteries, 1 Cor. iv. 1; but must give up ourselves first to Christ *absolutely*, and to the church *according to the will of Christ*, 2 Cor. viii. 5. Our fear must not be *taught by the precepts of men*, Matth. xv. The doctrines of any men are to be tried by scripture, whatever authority they pretend to, *Acts xvii. 11*. An unlimited following church-guides brought the church into *Babylon*, and into all manner of spiritual whoredoms and abominations. You are not *baptized into the name of the church*, but into the *name of Christ*, 1 Cor. i. 13.

3. Do not think, that *you must attain this or that degree of grace, before you join yourself in full communion with a church of Christ in all ordinances*. But, when you have given up yourself to Christ, and learned the

the duty of communion, give up yourself unto a church of Christ, though you find much weakness and inability.

4. Keep communion with a church, *for the sake of communion with Christ*, 1 John i. 3. Zech. viii. 23. Therefore you must keep communion in Christ's pure ways only; and, in them, seek Christ by faith; that, in the enjoyment of those advantages, you may receive and act the godliness and holiness fore-mentioned, and aim at spiritual flourishing and growth in grace.

5. *Especially leave not the church in persecution*, when you need its help most, and are then most tried whether you will cleave to it. This is a sign of apostacy, Heb. x. 25. 26. Matth. xxiv. 9. 10. 12. 13. 14. We should cleave to one another as one flesh, even to prisons and death; or else we deny Christ in his members, Matth. xxv. 43.

D I R E C T I O N XIV.

That you may seek holiness and righteousness, only by believing in Christ, and walking in him by faith, according to the former directions, take encouragement from the great advantages of this way, and the excellent properties of it.

E X P L I C A T I O N.

THAT this is an *excellent, advantageous way*, appears by the following desirable properties of it.

1st, It hath this property, that it tends to the *abasement of all flesh, and exaltation of God only, in his grace and power through Christ*. And so it is agreeable to God's design in all his works, and the end that he aimeth at, Rom. xi. 6, Isa. ii. 17, Ezek. xxxvi. 21, 22. 23. 31. 32.

1. It sheweth, that we *can do nothing by our natural will, or any power of the flesh*; and that *God will not enable us to do any thing that way*, Rom.

vii. 18. However nature be stirred up by the law, or natural help, *Gal. iii. 21.*

2. It sheweth, that all our good works, and living to God, *are not by our own power and strength at all,* but by the power of *Christ*, living in us by faith; and that God enableth us to act, not merely according to our natural power, as he enableth carnal men and all other creatures, but above our own power, by Christ united to us and in us through the Spirit. God enableth us to act, not by ourselves, as he doth others, but by himself. We live as branches by the juice of the vine, act as members by the animal spirits of the head, and bring forth fruit by marriage to him as our husband, and work in the strength of him as the living bread that we feed on. He is all in the new man, *Col. iii. 11;* and all the promises are made good in him, *2 Cor. i. 20.*

2dly, It hath this property, that it *confuseth well with other doctrines of the gospel;* which contrary errors do not. I have shewed, that mens mistaking the true way of sanctification, is the cause of perverting the scripture in other points of faith, and of declining from the truth, to *Popish, Socinian, and Arminian tenets;* because men cannot seriously take that for truth, which they judge not to be according to godliness. But this way of holiness will evidence, that these gospel doctrines which they refuse, are according to godliness; and that those tenets which a blind zeal for holiness moveth them to embrace, are indeed contrary to holiness; however Satan appeareth to their natural understandings as an *angel of light* in such tenets. Whatever men say, it is certain that *Legalists* are indeed the *Antinomians.* I shall instance in some *truths* confirmed by it.

1. The doctrine of *original sin*, *viz.* not only the guilt of *Adam's* sin, and a corrupt nature, but utter impotency to do spiritual good, and proneness to sin, which is death to God, in all people according to nature, *Psal. li. 5. Rom. v. 12.* If there were no new way to holiness since the fall, original sin might make us

us despair: but there is a *new birth*, a *new heart*, a *new creature*; and therefore we have directed you to the seeking of holiness by the Spirit of Christ, and willing good freely by a spiritual power, as new creatures, partakers of a divine nature in Christ. There were no need of a new man, or a new creation, if the old were not without strength and life, *John* iii. 5. 6. *Eph.* ii. 8. But original deadness cannot hinder God's working faith, and hungerings and thirstings after Christ, by the Spirit through the gospel, in those that God chuseth to walk holily and blamelessly before him in love, *1 Thess.* i. 4. 5. *Acts* xxvi. 18. And so we are made alive in *a new head*, and become branches of another vine, living to God by the Spirit, not by nature.

2. It confirms us in the doctrine of *predestination*. *Election by grace* destroys *seeking by works*, but not *by grace*, *Rom.* xi. 5. 6. And, seeing it appears, by this doctrine of sanctification through Christ, that we are God's workmanship as to all the good wrought in us, *Phil.* ii. 12. 13. *Eph.* ii. 10. We may well admit, that he hath appointed his pleasure from eternity, without infringing the natural liberty of our corrupt wills, which reacheth not unto good works, *Acts* xv. 18. Compared with 36. Man's natural free-will may well consist with God's decree; as in paradise. *Decretum radix contingentiae*.

3. It confirms us in the true doctrine of *justification and reconciliation with God by faith*, relying on the merits of Christ's blood, without any works of our own; and without considering faith as a work to *procure favour* by the righteousness of the act, but only as a hand to receive the gift, or as the very eating and drinking of Christ actually, rather than any kind of *condition* intitling us to him as our food. For, if we are sanctified, and so restored to the image of God, and life, by the Spirit through faith; it is evident, that God hath taken us into his favour, and pardoned our sins, by the same faith, without the law; or else we should not have the fruits and effects

of his favour thereby to our eternal salvation, *Rom.* viii. 2. Yea his justice would not admit his giving life without works, if we were not made righteous in Christ by the same faith. Neither can guilty cursed creatures, that cannot work by reason of their deadness under the curse, be brought to a rational love of God, except they apprehend his loving them first freely without works, *1 John* iv. 19. The great objection, and reason of so many controversies and books written about it, is, because they think, that men will trust to be saved, however they live. But sanctification is an effect of justification, and floweth from the same grace; and we trust for them both by the same faith, and for the latter in order to the former. And such a faith, be it never so confident, tendeth not to licentiousness, but to holiness: and we grant, that justification by grace destroys holiness by legal endeavours, but not by grace. So that there is no need to live a *Papist*, and die an *Antinomian*.

4. It confirms us in the doctrine of *real union with Christ*, so plentifully held forth in scripture.

5: It confirms us in the doctrine of *certain final perseverance* of the saints, *John* iii. 36. vi. 37, and v. 24. *1 John* iii. 9. *1 Thess.* v. 24. *Phil.* i 6. *John* ... 23. 29, and iv. 14. They think this doctrine maketh people careless of good works. I answer, It maketh people *careless* of seeking them by *their own natural strength*, and in a way of slavish fear; but *careful* and courageous in trusting on *the grace of God* for them, when they are brought, by regeneration, heartily to desire them, *Rom.* vi. 14. *Numb.* xiii. 30; setting upon the doing of them in that grace, *1 Thess.* v. 8. 11. And I have shewed, that all fears of damnation will never bring persons to work out of love; and that nothing will do it, but a comfortable doctrine.

3dly, It hath this excellent *property*, that it is the *never failing, effectually powerful, alone sufficient, and sure way to attain to true holiness*. And that, (1). Because, as we are under the law in our natural estate, we

we are *dead*, and *children of wrath*, Eph. ii. 1. 3. Seeking a pure life, without a pure nature, is building without a foundation. And there is no seeking a new nature from the law; for it bids us make brick without straw: and faith to the cripple, Walk, without giving any strength. (2). In this way only God is reconciled to us, even in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 19. Eph. i. 7. And so he loves us, and is a fit object of our love, 1 John iv. 19. So that here is a sure foundation for godliness, and love to God with all our heart, might, and soul; and sin is not only restrained, but mortified: and not only the outside made clean, but the inside, and the image of God renewed; and holy actings surely follow. We sin not according to the new nature, though we are not perfect in degree, because of the old nature.

4thly, It is a most *pleasant* way to those that are in it, Prov. iii. 17; and that in several respects.

1. It is a most *plain* way, easy to be found, to one that feeth his own deadnes under the law, and is so renewed in the spirit of his mind, as to know and be persuaded of the truth of the gospel.

2. It is *easy* to those that walk in it *by the Spirit*, tho' it be difficult to get into it, by reason of the opposition of the flesh or devil scaring us, or seducing us from it. Here you have holines as a free gift received by faith, an act of the mind and soul. Whosoever will, may come, take it, and drink freely: and nothing is required but a willing mind, John vii. 38. Isa. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17. But the law is an intolerable burden, Matth. xviii. 5. Acts xv. 10; if duty be laid on us by its terms. We are not left in this way to conquer lusts by our endeavours; which is a successless work: but what is duty, is given, and the law is turned into promises, Heb. viii. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. 26. Jer. xxxi. 33, and xxxii. 40. We have all now in Christ, Col. iii. 11, and ii. 9. 10. 15. 17. This is a catholick medicine, instead of a thousand. How pleasant would this free gift, *holiness*, be to us, if

if we knew our own wants, inabilities, and sinfulness ? How ready are some to toil continually, and macerate their bodies in a melancholy legal way, to get holiness, rather than perish for ever ? And therefore, how ready should we be, when it is only, *Take and have ! Believe, and be sanctified and saved ?* 2 Kings v. 13. Christ's burden is light by his Spirit's bearing it, Matth. xi. 30. No weariness, but renewing of strength, Isa. xi. 31.

3. It is a way of peace, Prov. iii. 17 ; free from fears and terrors of conscience, that those meet with unavoidably who seek salvation by works ; for *the law worketh wrath*, Rom. iv. 15. It is not the way of mount Sinai, but of Jerusalem, Heb. xiii. 18. 22.

4. It is a way that is paved with love, like Solomon's chariot, Song iii. 10. We are to set God's loving kindness, and all the gifts of his love, still before our eyes, *Psal. xxvi. 2* ; Christ's death, resurrection, intercession, before our eyes ; which breed *peace, joy, hope, love*, Rom. xv. 13. Isa. xxxv. 10.

5. Our very moving, acting, and walking in this way, is a pleasure and delight. Every good work is done with pleasure ; the very labour of the way is pleasant.

5thly, It is a high exalted way, above all other ways. These are the *heavenly places in Christ Jesus*, that God hath set us in, *being quickened and raised up together with him*, Eph. ii. 5. 6.

1. We live high here ; for *we live not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*, and Christ in us, with all his fulness, Rom. viii. 1. 2. Gal. ii. 20, and v. 25. We walk in *fellowship with God dwelling in us, and walking in us*, 2 Cor. vi. 16. 18. And therefore our works are of higher price and excellency, than the works of others ; because they are *wrought in God*, John iii. 21 ; and are the fruits of God's Spirit, Gal. v. 23. Phil. i. 11. And we may know, that they are accepted and good, by our gospel-principles, which others have not, Rom. vii. 6.

2. We

2. We are enabled to the *most difficult duties*, Phil. iv. 1. 3; and nothing is too hard for us. See the great works done by faith, *Heb. xi. Mark ix. 23*; works that carnal men think folly and madness to venture upon, (they are so great), and honourable achievements, in doing and suffering for Christ.

3. We walk in an *honourable state*, with God, and on *honourable terms*; not as guilty creatures, to get our pardon by works, nor as bond-servants, to earn our meat and drink; but as sons and heirs, walking towards the full possession of that happiness to which we have a title: and so we have much boldness in God's presence, *Gal. iv. 6. 7*. We can approach nearer to God than others, and walk before him confidently, without slavish fear; not as strangers, but as such who are *of his own family*, *Eph. ii. 19. 20*. And this prompts us to do greater things than others; *walking as free men*, *Rom. vi. 17. 18. John viii. 35. 36*. It is a *Kingly way*; the law to us, is a Royal law, a law of liberty, and our privilege; not a bond and yoke of compulsion.

4. It is the way only of those that are *honourable and precious in the eyes of the Lord*, even his elect and redeemed ones, whose special privilege it is, to walk therein: *No unclean beast goeth there*, *Isa. xxxv. 8. 9*. No carnal man can walk in this way, but only those that are *taught of God*, *John vi. 44. 45. 46*. Nor would it have come into our hearts without divine revelation.

5. The preparing this way, cost Christ very dear. It is a *costly way*, *Heb. x. 19. 20. 1 Pet. iii. 18*.

6. It is a *good old way*, wherein thou mayest follow the footsteps of all the flock.

7. It is the *way of perfection*. It leads to such holiness, which shall, in a while, be absolutely perfect. It differs only in the degree and manner of manifestation from the holiness of heaven: there the saints live by the same Spirit; and the same God is all in all, *1 Cor. xv. 28. John iv. 14*; and have the image

image of the same spiritual man, 1 Cor. xv. 49. Only here we have but the first fruits of the Spirit, Rom. viii. 23; and live by faith, and not by sight, 2 Cor. v. 7; and are not full grown in Christ, Eph. iv. 13. Sanctification in Christ is glorification begun, as glorification is sanctification perfected.

6 NO 61

F I N I S,



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